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THE GOSPEL OF RIGHTNESS

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THE GOSPEL OF
RIGHTNESS

A STUDY IN PAULINE PHILOSOPHY

BY

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PREFACE

THE individual would be rash indeed who could hope to add anything conspicuously new to the great and ever-increasing mass of Pauline exegesis, the result of the industry and devotion of many different ages and schools of thought from the second century to the twentieth. But the present book has been undertaken for a class of thinkers and readers who are not so widely catered for as might be—those, namely, to whom the writings of the great Apostle have been shelved as no longer in keeping with the liberal thought of to-day. St Paul for many thinkers is as obsolete as Tertullian or Calvin. He speaks a language no longer understood of the modern mind, which is growing steadily in the belief that it is too rational on the one hand, and too mystical on the other, to find satisfaction in the religion of its birth.

It is because the great documents of that religion have a deathless message for men at all

stages of growth, albeit a message that requires continual restatement in terms of each particular age, that I have deemed it worth while to endeavour to revive interest among those I have just named in the teachings of a great but neglected personality. I have attempted to present the Apostle in a somewhat new light—as a philosopher who develops a remarkable scheme of spiritual thought from one or two very simple and self-evident principles. What these principles are I have set forth with as much clearness as lies in my power. I have avoided all temptation to trench on other aspects of the Apostle's truth than those which have seemed fundamental to his general teaching. In this book he is not so much an apostle as a thinker who is able to lead the mind into regions beyond the scope of the ordinary reasoning faculty, and to open up vistas of Being which the modernist, with all his knowledge, can ill afford to ignore.

The following chapters, though each contributing to a progressive unfoldment of the main idea, are so arranged as to form separate and independent studies of the subjects which they announce. That they are studies only, and not complete expositions, is shown by the fact that to each is devoted a chapter instead, as might well be, of an entire volume. The whole essay,

indeed, can claim to be little more than a series of notes for a more extended work. It is a brief statement, rather than a complete demonstration, of the great principle which is at once the substance and the interpretation of Pauline doctrine. But if the present outline should serve as suggestions for a new departure in Pauline study that shall have fertile results in abler hands than mine, it will be none the less useful for being incomplete.

FOREWORD

THE following chapters offer a suggestion in outline of what to the writer is the pivotal teaching of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. One of the reasons why St Paul is often laid aside in favour of more systematic but less spiritually illuminated writers possibly lies in the difficulty of discovering within the mazes of his somewhat involved argument the feature that shall serve as clue to the whole. This essay is an effort to weave the rich profusion of spiritual thought in the Epistles into a harmony of more or less orderly teaching. But a difficulty of no small weight presents itself at the very outset. We find ourselves confronted with a terminology that is left undefined ; or, to be more accurate, with a terminology whose definition is taken as given. To select one illustration among many of this ambiguity :—

The Apostle has a Gospel which is the burden of all his epistolary efforts, and once only—in the letter to the Romans—does he undertake to define

it in a phrase. His Gospel is the "power of God unto salvation,"¹ and reveals a "rightness of God, out of faith into faith,"² as the original has it,—a condition, that is, of which faith is the basis, the means, and the end. To reach the heart of this definition, indeed, is to possess ourselves of the clue to the whole Epistle, for what follows is largely an elaboration of this, the great text of the treatise. The Gospel is twofold; it is the revelation of a process and an end. The end is a state of Being defined as the "Rightness of God"; the process is the workings of a power termed throughout the Epistles the power of faith. Faith is not only the condition under which the Gospel is received; it is also of the very essence of the Gospel itself; the alpha and omega, the basis, substance, middle, and end of the "good news" is nothing less than this new and mysterious principle, the power of "faith."

But rightness and faith, which are integrals of St Paul's definition of the Gospel, require themselves to be defined. We shall, however, search in vain for anything approaching precision and invariability in the Apostle's use of these and similar terms. As Professor Jowett well says: "In using the same words with St Paul, we may not be using them in precisely the same sense.

¹ Rom. i. 16.

² Rom. i. 17, ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν.

Nay, the very exactness with which we apply them, the result of the definitions, oppositions, associations, of ages of controversy, is of itself a difference of meaning. The mere lapse of time tends to make the similarity deceitful." And again: "A well-known difficulty in the interpretation of the epistles is the seemingly uncertain use of δικαιοσύνη, ἀλήθεια, ἀγάπη, ἥστυς, δόξα, etc., words apparently the most simple, and yet taking sometimes in the same passage different shades and colours of meaning. Sometimes they are attributes of God, in other passages qualities in man; here realities, there mere ideas; sometimes active, sometimes passive. In the technical language of German philosophy, they are objective and subjective at once."¹

The result of this complete lack of fixity of terms in the Pauline writings is that expressions such as "faith," "grace," "gospel," "righteousness," and the like, have meant, and will continue to mean, dissimilar things to dissimilar commentators. It is true that the subject-matter of the epistles does not readily lend itself to stereotyped formulæ. Faith, for example, cannot be unfolded in half a line of definition, neither is it possible to limit the connotation of righteousness to a page, or even a chapter, of definite exposition.

¹ *Epistles of St Paul*, vol. ii. p. 92.

No teaching that is truly *θεόπνευτος* — God-breathed — can be confined to the particular interpretation that was uppermost in the mind of the writer at the time at which it was given, for its full meaning will be as inexhaustible as the Spirit whence it came. This is generally admitted; therefore the commentator who is able to bring to his biblical scholarship the additional help of intuitive insight will have a comparatively free rein. At the same time he will be faced with the difficulty of having to appeal to ambiguous language in his endeavour to ascertain, not only what certain expressions must have meant to St Paul, and those to whom he wrote, but what they may legitimately mean to us who approach them from the more matured standpoint of two thousand years of Christian influence, and three-quarters of a century of modern thought.

Not only is the Apostle's language obscure and inexact in many particulars, but the student who comes to the Epistles with a fresh mind is almost bewildered at first by the total absence in them of explanatory or exegetical matter, the writer's method, if indeed he has a method, being to condense and capture a high, indefinable atmosphere in symbolic phrases borrowed to a great extent from the technique of older Mystery cults. But it is plain, above all, that a writer of letters who

writes, not for posterity, but for a few already familiar with his detailed utterances, would be the last person to consent to the setting up of necessarily informal documents as authoritative expositions of his Gospel in its entirety. Therefore, in our present attempt to construct the fuller meaning of St Paul from the skeleton of thought contained in his Epistles, we shall keep in view the fact, so often ignored by students of Pauline exegesis, that we have to deal, not with a systematised philosophy, but with an incomplete substitute for the spoken word of a great preacher and teacher.

And this is not our main difficulty. We have also to remember that religions, like nations and individuals, have a definite ancestry, a sympathetic acquaintance with which is one of the great prerequisites of success in the study of the main subject. And to complicate the problem further, we must take note that the Christianity of St Paul had not one line of ancestry, but many. It is indeed a subject involving the whole history of primitive thought, and the magnificent work that has been done upon it by students in recent time has greatly helped to develop that sense of syncretism and synthetism which is the peculiar product of the science of comparative religion in our own day—the sense that no one religion can be adequately interpreted and understood until all

religions are passed in some degree under sympathetic review. "How knows he Christianity who only Christianity knows?" is a question of increasing importance to students who seek in their own faith for the inner things of life. Therefore, we feel it necessary to emphasise at the outset of this study our earnest recognition of the tremendous problems which are involved in the interpretation of even a single one of the pages of our national Scriptures. The delicate and difficult work of the historical specialist must always be kept in mind, even where the scope of a book, such as the present, is the more limited one of simple interpretation. For the roots of Pauline thought run deep into the soil of the ages: through the many mystic Jewish communities relating to the inner side of Pharisaism, to Babylon, Chaldea, and Persia, on the one hand; and on the other, through the lines of contact between Egypt and Greece, to the direct Egyptian tradition in which we find many doctrines fully developed which might otherwise have seemed to belong exclusively to the domain of Christian dogmatics. Greece, indeed, was the connecting link between all the great lines of mystic thought in the ancient world. Egypt and the East had come to her in the days of Plato,¹ when the

¹ G. R. S. Mead, *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*, pp. 54-5.

Orphic and Pythagorean communities had imported a modified Orientalism into her own indigenous mystery tradition ; and in later days she had herself gone forth to the East, capturing thought with the capture of peoples. So we find in the course of time Oriental thinkers and mystics becoming Hellenised on Pythagorean and Platonic lines, and Greek thinkers becoming Orientalised under the influence of the innumerable religious communities dwelling in mystical, cosmopolitan Alexandria, as well as in Asia Minor, and other regions subject to Greece, and even in Greece herself. Of all people, the Jews, who were the great traders of the ancient world, and the most important settlers in Alexandria after its foundation, had the best opportunity of profiting by this universal interchange of religions, though a less exclusive race would have become still more largely modified by the thought of the great civilisation in which it had taken root. Still, it came about eventually that the mystic doctrines of all three lines of descent—Jewish, Greek, and Egyptian—with some conservative exceptions, gave and received ; individuals in the different communities, at all events, extended each other's knowledge, and modified each other's prejudices. At the time of the Christian era, Alexandria was the melting-pot of this heterogeneous admixture

of faiths and races, and the schools of the Alexandrian Rabbis, the Hellenists, were the direct points of contact between Greek and Jewish lines of tradition. Of these brilliant lights of the Jewish faith, the best known is Philo, whom we find bringing out many points of contact between Rabbinical thought and Platonic philosophy; he lays, at the same time, the foundations of Christian exegesis, and to a great extent of Christian dogmatics.

Paganism and Christianity blend with softer edges than is commonly supposed. The Therapeuts of whom Philo writes A.D. 25, who were claimed by Eusebius as the members of the first Alexandrian Christian Church, have now been proved by Mr Conybeare to be a Jewish mystery-cult, strongly tinged with sun-worship. Again, it is the Alexandrian school of Christian philosophy—a school whose direct evolution was from Greek thought—which laid the foundation of general Christian theology. The Græco-Egyptian Trismegistic writings, furthermore, were employed by the early Church Fathers in support of the main dogmas of Christianity, and were welcomed also later by the Humanists in the Revival of Learning as a valuable adjunct to the faith. Both parties appealed to a tradition that had never been called in question, in order to

show that they taught on main points what Hermes and other Pagan teachers had taught;¹ their message was not fundamentally new, but was rather a providentially inspired attempt to purify and complete the old body of tradition, and to clothe it anew in forms better suited to the young civilisations which were then struggling in the womb of the early centuries.

It is impossible to read the Trismegistic literature side by side with St Paul without becoming convinced that in the Epistles of the latter we have echoes of the Græco-Egyptian form of the Gnosis illuminated by Christian developments. It is evident that both the Apostle and he who is styled "Hermes" are treating of the same deep mysteries, that they were dedicated to the same spiritual Gnosis. For whether under Greek, Egyptian, or Christian forms, there can be but one Gnosis, one divine Science of the spiritual Mystery in man and nature,² and he is most truly Christian who will accord to Pagan systems that kinship with

¹ Vide *Hermes, the Thrice-Greatest*, by G. R. S. Mead, vol. i.

p. 45.

² "It is enough to know that the mystery was hidden and yet revealed in the shadow-garments of Chaldean, Babylonian, Thracian, Magian, Phœnician, Hebrew, Egyptian, Phrygian, Thracian, and Greek mystery traditions. It was, in brief, fundamental in all such wisdom-shows, and necessarily so, for it was the Christ-Mystery."—*Op. cit.*, vol. i. p. 198.

his own faith which was so vehemently denied by the early zeal of adolescent Christianity.

This close union of the Gnosis of different traditions is probably the cause of the difficulty we have noticed with regard to St Paul's lack of clear definition. He uses words which were the common property of his spiritual ancestors, both he and the "Thrice-greatest" employing what are apparently accepted Mystery terms. Both speak of the "Logos," the "Saviour," the "Second Birth," the "Alone-Begotten," the "Pleroma," the "Gnosis," the "Eikon," the "Resurrection from the dead,"—in short, the vocabulary of St Paul is practically the vocabulary of the pre-Christian Hermetic treatises. Putting aside the now exploded explanation of plagiarism, anticipation, falsified dates, and the rest, there is no reason to suppose that common terms did not refer to common, or at least related, truths. So the disciples of Hermes may be linked in a common fellowship with the disciples of the Christ; the old and new mutually interpret and complete one another.

We may be permitted, then, to study St Paul with the idea in view that he is linking the Gnosis of an older day, and an outworn form, with the Gnosis of a new era, in association with a great, impelling Illumination. He may or may not

have been in conscious harmony with his predecessors in thought. On the one hand we have his confession of indebtedness to the Greek and the Barbarian ;¹ but on the other hand there are not a few passages which seem to indicate that, like most great reformers, he was inclined to be unfair to that which had gone before him. His methods, at all events, are radically opposed to the Mystery-teachings of the past ; secrecy is now exchanged for propaganda, and the highest spiritual truths are thrown open to all who can receive them.

¹ Rom. i. 14.

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THE GOSPEL OF RIGHTNESS

CHAPTER I

THE GREAT PAULINE PRINCIPLE

THE Apostle's Gospel of Rightness is *par excellence* the Gospel of Christhood—the Christhood manifested by his Master, and to be ultimately realised by all who tread in His way. This is the Pauline message in a word. Christhood is the great and all-embracing mystery that includes and reconciles the lesser mystery of the Opposites which we find existing in man and the world. If the universe presents itself to us as a series of essential contrasts, the master of the universe will be he in whom these contrasts are reconciled and atoned. Hence we shall endeavour to present an outline of the method by which St Paul sets forth his Gospel of Rightness as emerging from deep and eternal Opposites. And in so doing, we shall emphasise a feature of the Apostle's teaching which seems to be of more important and far-

reaching significance than the majority of commentators acknowledge. Antithesis—the balance and play of contrasting elements of thought—is so marked a feature in the Epistles that reference to it is almost superfluous; yet the skill and wisdom of this antithetical method may, for many students, be less apparent than its use. To develop a final and imperative idea—Christhood, the state of the rightness of God,—by a series of effective contrasts—life against death, sin against grace, works against faith, law against Gospel; to show that idea to be so entirely the product of its co-relatives as to be neither the one nor the other exclusively, but the outcome of the mutual and right relation of each, is the task we have set ourselves to attempt, because the success of such venture seems to be implicitly promised in the Pauline writings. It is far from our desire to read into the Epistles a philosophy that their contents do not reveal, and there is, we must admit, no *definite formulation* of this important teaching in any of the Pauline writings that have come down to us. But it cannot be too often emphasised that a series of more or less informal letters will convey little of a precise philosophic nature beyond the general indication of certain modes of thought. St Paul, for example, was undoubtedly acquainted with the great Logos

doctrine of Philo and his predecessors in the mystic schools of Alexandria. It receives, however, no definite treatment in the Epistles, being rather among the many other mystic elements in his burning and assured convictions which he regards as accepted data. At the same time his whole teaching is based on the implicit recognition of this doctrine.

So with the principle of the Opposites. When we find the elements of the whole moral life represented as a series of sharply opposed contrasts, we not unreasonably conclude that such representation is the acknowledgment of a great law of Being, that a mind which makes such free and constant use of antitheses must recognise, at least tacitly, their importance as first principles of thought. In short, St Paul's philosophy of contrasts is demonstrated by their constant appearance throughout his writings.

In this he has not only justified his confession of indebtedness to the Greek and the Barbarian,¹ but has also forestalled the philosophic developments of modern times. Indeed, the method of developing thought by antithesis, which we find in germ in the Pauline Epistles, is based on a fundamental philosophic principle.² If we examine the

¹ Rom. i. 14.

² Professor Jowett speaks of the Pauline use of antithesis thus : "When two words are used as an antithesis, the meaning of one of them explains and limits the meaning of the other. For

movement of thought everywhere, we shall find it to be always producing by contrasts some aspect of its content, first making distinctions and then reconciling them in a higher standpoint, which is implied in the very fact of fixing something as distinguished from something else.¹ That St Paul had grasped this great law of Relativity is shown by his demonstration that in theological, as well as in other departments of thought, two opposites imply each other. In tracing the Apostle's development of this principle, we shall note how profoundly elemental and far-reaching he shows it to be. But let us first observe the extent to which its recognition has united him to the greatest minds both of the ancient and the modern world.

The law of Relativity, though implicit in all systems of thought, has been emphasised forcibly by particular schools. In the East it has ever been a principle of fundamental importance. It may be incautious to affirm that the influence of the Vedanta had possibly tinged the thought of

example : we cannot precisely know what St Paul means by the righteousness of faith, without also knowing what he meant by the righteousness of the law ; or what life means, without considering also what he means by death ; or what the spirit means, without knowing what the flesh or the body means. Such is especially the case with all ideas of the things that eye hath not seen. Though we do not know what spirit is, we know what body is, and we conceive of spirit as what body is not." (*Epistles of St Paul*, vol. ii. p. 97.)

¹ Vide *The Pathway to Reality*, Haldane.

Greece as early as Pythagoras, who became its channel for the West ; and that passing onward into the Eleatic and Heracleitic Schools, it had become eventually impressed upon Plato after his contact with the Pythagorean colonies in Magna Græcia. One thing, however, is certain, that the dualism which was at the root of the Dvaita and Vesishadvaita schools of Vedanta (established probably a thousand years before Heracleitus) is echoed in the teachings of that philosopher, who held that unity, indeed, exists only in so far as the life of the world parts into antitheses. Unity presupposes duality, harmony discord, attraction repulsion, each side of the antithesis being necessary to the effectual realisation of the other. More than a century later we find Plato echoing Heracleitus, and forestalling Hegel in discussing the equal existence of the alternatives true and false, being and non-being. Every notion may be expressed as the side of an antithesis, and recognised as at once existent and non-existent, the notions of the *ταὐτόν* and the *θάτερον* expressing the form of the antithesis in general, and constituting the universal elements of combination for all notions.

Aristotle, who returns to Heracleitus in a richer and more concrete form, bases his whole system on four great principles of Being which may practically be reduced to a fundamental antithesis,

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—potentiality (*δύναμις*), and actuality (*ἐνέργεια*), matter (*ὕλη*), and form (*εἶδος*). These extremes he found it necessary to unite by a third principle, *ἐντελέχεια*, which represents the movement of the opposites towards reconciliation, the potential passing into the actual, matter realised in form. Thus the notion of fundamental contrasts is the basis of a scheme of philosophy which influenced the thought of Europe as late as the fifteenth century.

Among the moderns Spinoza, whose intellectual father was Descartes, expressed the same law of Relativity and Contrasts in the key-phrase of his system, “*omnis determinatio est negatio*.” It is impossible to make a declaration about anything without opposing it to that which it is not. And the strict observance of that principle with regard to God, the one Substance, to whom there is no excluding negative, became the Achilles’ Heel of the system. For an Absolute who contains the very contraries by which He is determined cannot logically be said to manifest at all, manifestation having meaning only in contradistinction to the alternative that manifestation is not.

The brilliant post-Kantian trio, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, contribute to the stock of Western thought a deeper and fuller view of this great law of Relativity. For Fichte, thesis (position) presupposes antithesis (contra-position); if any

non-A is to be granted, A must be previously granted. What non-A is, consequently, I know only on the condition of knowing A—an illuminating principle when applied, as we shall presently see it applied, to the spiritual facts of being by the Apostle many centuries in anticipation.

Schelling proceeded on the same lines, and served as a preparation for Hegel, whose great contribution to Western thought was his law of the Tertium or mean. He demonstrated that two extremes, or opposites, further demand a third or unifying principle which shall be at once their presupposition and their reconciliation. He saw truly that there is always an end of the opposition of contraries, a point of unity in which each is mutually resolved, for the reason that extremes are but the disruption of the mean which is their point of balance.

The rejection of this law by later thinkers has led to unfortunate results. Mansel and Hamilton, deriving from Schelling, and Herbert Spencer from them, employed the law of Relativity to demonstrate the existence of an ultimate principle, showing that as everything implies its opposite, so the whole mass of relatives taken as one term would necessarily demand an opposite, the Absolute. They overlooked the fact that the Absolute and the Relative together make a new relation which

requires to be opposed by a yet higher Absolute, and so on, *ad infinitum*. The mind cannot rest in an eternal dualism which is doomed, by the very nature of things, to be incomplete and productive of metaphysical disaster ; hence there have arisen not a few to point out the *reductio ad absurdum* of such imperfect reasoning.¹

Hegel's law of the Tertium puts a stop to these verbal quibbles. He is generally regarded as the first among Western thinkers to have developed this principle—the East had possessed it since Sankara ; as a matter of fact he is not the first, for St Paul had forestalled him. It is to reach this point in the history of thought that the foregoing excursion has been made. Paul has a great Tertium which is the reconciling principle, the higher unity that arises out of the balance of sharp and complete antitheses. We have no definite means of knowing to what extent previous systems of thought may have influenced him in this respect : whether he learned from Sankara, or from the Kabbalah in which this principle was to the fore, or even from Aristotle's criticism that a tertium or "third man" was the objectionable necessity of the Platonic theory of Ideas. Whether this teaching of his be derived or original, he has a great Tertium which he calls the Gospel of the

¹ Vide *The Science of Peace*, by Bhagavan Dâs, pp. 56-57.

“Rightness of God.” The Greek word popularly rendered “righteousness” (*δικαιοσύνη*),¹ but having from its root a much wider significance, includes the purely ethical idea of upright behaviour in the more extensive conception of balance, wholeness, the perfect equilibrium of a nature no longer out of relation with any element in the universe. *Δικαιοσύνη* is the state of being made right, and derives from *δικαιοῦν*, a term of legal significance which some writers translate “to acquit.” We find, for example, Dr Hatch (*Enc. Brit.*, vol. xvii. p. 425 note), speaking as follows: “It is difficult to estimate the mischief which has been caused by the fact that *justificare* was adopted from early times as the translation of *δικαιοῦν*, and the consequent fact that a large part of Western theology has been based upon the etymological signification of *justificare* rather than upon the meaning of the Greek original. One of the clearest instances of the meaning of *δικαιοῦν* in Biblical Greek is LXX. Exod. xxiii. 7, οὐ δικαιοῶσεις τὸν ἁσεβῆ ἕνεκεν δώρων, “thou shalt not acquit the wicked man for bribes.”

But this reading does not really affect the etymology of the word. *Δικαιοῦν* implies *a balance of claims*, hence a judgment pronounced in favour of

¹ “*Δικαιοσύνη*, righteousness, is used in the general sense of rightness according to God’s standard.”—*Word Studies in the New Testament*, by M. R. Vincent, D.D., vol. iii. p. 325.

one party in a suit. In other words, a judgment, whether of acquittal or condemnation, is the *legal equipoise between two opposites*, their tertium, or point of resolution. Thus to be acquitted is not to be let off undeservedly, but to be *pronounced justified*, after a delicate balancing of opposite lines of evidence ; hence *δικαιοῦν* and *justificare* are not far short of being synonymous.

Now, the derivative word *δικαιοσύνη* (righteousness, "rightness"), which is the state of justification, contains the *same fundamental idea of balance* that is involved in an act of judgment. This is the primary sense of the word, from which justice, righteousness, rightness, are developed as secondary meanings. So when St Paul, with the legal metaphor in his mind, refers to a Gospel of Rightness (*δικαιοσύνη*), he is speaking of a condition in which balance plays an essential part. The Gospel confers, or is the instrument of a state of "rightness" which is the mystic point of equilibrium between the pairs of opposites. It is the ultimate of the human state, the great *καταλλαγή*, or at-one-ment of all the complex elements of the nature. He who shall have attained this tremendous spiritual end in its fullest and most philosophical meaning, will have nothing further to do ; he is "right," "saved," whole, having found what, in the

Northern Buddhist tradition, is termed the "Gate of Balance." No longer for him the "coming short" inevitable to partial growth and restricted vision; he, the man made "right," is the man of spiritual maturity, a master of all the lower stages out of which he has been fashioned into the perfect workmanship. Keeping this state always before us as the great text of the Apostolic treatises, we shall yet postpone its more detailed consideration till the close of our examination of the main Pauline antitheses, which have for their mean, or reconciling point, this Gospel of the "Rightness of God." And in thus endeavouring to make our study schematic, it is not pretended that we are following the Apostle's own lines, or that the thought we are attempting to develop was more than implicit in his discursive and informal writings. It may be that we are rendering him a service in making orderly and explicit the great idea which we think we can sense behind the frequent chaos of his molten eloquence. Dogmatist though he was, the fire of his thought often overleapt the barriers of mental form, leaving the heart of the reader aglow, but the intelligence unconvinced. It is, then, with this desire at heart that we shall examine the five great antitheses, or opposed states of being, which constitute the subject-matter of the epistles, and in

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especial of the Epistle to the Romans, in order finally to develop the higher principle of unity in which they are harmonised and resolved. We will present them in the following order :

A (Macrocosmic or Universal).

(*a*)

Old Man — New Man. (Flesh—Spirit.)	Man Universal, under his twofold aspect of material and spiritual. The highest generalisation.
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(*b*)

Sin—Grace. (Death—Life.)	States of being of the Old and New Man respectively.
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(*c*)

Wrath ($\delta\rho\gamma\eta$) — Glory ($\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$).	The “centrifugal” and “centripetal” forces which compose the moral life ; Sin and Grace in active operation.
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B (Microcosmic or Particular).

(*a*)

Adam—Jesus. Natural Body—Spiritual Body.	Particular manifestations of universal types, with their vehicles of expression.
--	--

(*b*)

Law—Gospel. (Works—Faith.) (Circumcision — Uncircumcision.)	Modes of being of the “Adam” and “Christ” man respectively.
---	---

It has been deemed wiser to arrange this classification according to the thought underlying the Epistles as a whole, instead of adhering to the order in which the terms are found in the Apostolic writings. This in no case interferes with the logical progress of the argument, but rather assists it by emphasising what St Paul was content to leave in most cases inferred, namely, the distinction between universal states and particular applications. Our plan will be to examine *seriatim* the great ideas contained in each member of each antithesis, first from their abstract and then from their concrete aspect ; and finally to show the perfect balance of each in the state of Christhood, or Rightness, the attainment of which is the goal and *raison d'être* of Christian discipleship.

CHAPTER II

THE OLD MAN. (A. MACROCOSMIC OR UNIVERSAL.)

SPEAKING briefly and generally, the subject-matter of St Paul is man in two elemental states of being, each of which is subject to its own conditions, and is governed by its own laws. These states, which are termed by the Apostle the "Old Man"¹ and the "New,"² represent the widest generalisation in the Pauline philosophy, since the entire experience of the race may be included within them. In short, it is to the activity of the man of flesh and the man of spirit, their age-long struggle for equipoise and reconciliation, that we owe the moral history of the world.

The Apostle's message was to men who had abandoned the old state, and were in process of realising the new. The Gospel set forth the methods of this change, and was made authoritative by the example and inspiration of One

¹ Rom. vi. 6 ; Eph. iv. 22 ; Col. iii. 9.

² Eph. iv. 24 ; Col. iii. 10.


in Whom the spiritual state, ultimately to be realised by all, had been manifested in transcendent measure. For St Paul, Creation in its double aspect was the history of the evolution of the race from Adam, the fleshly man, to Christ, the spiritual man. We have, therefore, to regard the "Old Man" and the "New" as factors in a mighty evolutionary process; as great elemental contraries, mutually opposed, yet mutually related, each necessary to the other, and to the balance of the Perfect Man, who is their tertium, or principle of unity. For the New Man, it must be carefully noted, does not become the *Perfect* Man until he is in equilibrium with his opposite.

The state of spiritual equipoise, to which both opposites alike contribute, is the great objective of the Gospel. The Apostle refers to it under various names; it is the Perfect Man,¹ the New Creation,² the "Rightness of God,"³ the Christ-Unity which reconciles all contrasts, in which "there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female";⁴ and its representative is "Jesus, the mediator,"⁵ He who unites or mediates between the elemental contraries in man, "having slain the enmity."⁶

¹ Eph. iv. 13.

² Gal. vi. 15.

³ Rom. i. 17.

⁴ Gal. iii. 28. | 

⁵ Heb. xii. 24. (The latter is not a Pauline writing).

⁶ Eph. ii. 16.

In the state of the Christ the whole series of Pauline opposites find their at-one-ment. The Apostle never leaves his antitheses unreconciled, because their reconciliation is the definite text and message of his whole life-work ; he is ever pointing onward to that great product of the union of contraries, the "Rightness of God," which is nothing short of the condition of the Master Himself reflected in the corporate life of the Church, which is His body. We must, however, first consider each term of the antitheses in detail, before we shall be in a position to deal with the outcome of their relation.

Now, the very names Old Man and New are suggestive of what is perhaps one of the profoundest truths in the metaphysics of St Paul, viz. that each side of the antithesis is necessary to, and the presupposition of, the other. "These things are contrary the one to the other," he says ; or, better translated, "these things are matched with, or set over against each other"¹ (ἀντίκειται). Yet out of this relation of elemental opposition, out of a sundering so essential as to prevent any mutual approach in compromise, an eventual harmony is to arise—the harmony of the "Rightness of God," which cannot be brought about save as the life of the soul parts into antitheses.

¹ Gal. v. 17.

If, however, we ask of St Paul the why of this mysterious and eternal opposition, he is significantly silent. We touch, it may be, that mystery of the Cross which only he may know who has arisen therefrom. Of one thing the teacher would have us be certain—the mystery is embedded in the very foundation of things. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together"¹ with us; even the Divine Spirit participates in the universal agony "with groanings which cannot be uttered."² Strife is the keynote of manifestation. The physical world is built, supported, and renewed by the battle of life with death; form and life, force and matter, motion and inertia being "matched the one against the other" in a rivalry that has for its end the "Rightness of God," as revealed in the equilibrium of the material universe.

If, then, the balance of opposites is the law of a physical world of order and stability, no less is it the law of the universe within the soul of man. To put it more plainly, there can be no element of experience on any plane of Nature that is not the outcome of a relationship of two factors. But the relation may be one of hostility, or of union. There may be marriage of affinity with affinity, or there may be strife between

¹ Rom. viii. 22.

² Rom. viii. 26.

opposite and opposite. Both the relation of harmony and the relation of strife issue in result ; in both there proceeds of the twain "one new man."¹ The Apostle teaches us, with true insight, that in the domain of the spiritual life the ultimate issue is born, not of the marriage of likes, but of the marriage of unlikes. Strife, and not love, is the marriage-tie of the Gospel. Great and triumphant beyond words is the issue of that strange union, for its name is the "Rightness of God," and its representative is the Risen One, the Son, "made perfect through suffering."² But the process involves some of the most baffling mysteries of existence. The New Creation is to emerge from the throes of a Titanic struggle in which the immortal Ego, the "New Man," is in death-grip with dark tendencies in his nature that are no less dark because they make trial of his manhood. St Paul does not mince words when dealing with this side of the antithesis.³ "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these : fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." The flesh is an uncompromising enemy towards which no quarter is to be shown. To it are applied several

¹ Eph. ii. 15.² Heb. ii. 10.³ Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.

suggestive names. It is the "law in the members,"¹ the "carnal mind,"² and the "Old Man."³ We have chosen the latter term as the subject of the present chapter, because it is capable of yielding a philosophical truth of no small importance to the line of thought to be developed in this book.

It is our desire to show that contrasts, however conflicting, are ordered elements in a continuous process of human development; that their very opposition is part of an increasing purpose which is only fulfilled when that opposition is recognised and overcome, as the unbroken sphere depends for its perfection on the *absolute difference in direction* of its respective arcs, and yet unites or atones them.

Now the term "Old Man" seems to suggest the developmental idea that we are in need of. It connotes an element in human nature, properly the remnant of a day and an evolution long since passed away, which is evil *because it is obsolete*. Παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος, the ancient man, is commonly interpreted as though it were πρότερος ἄνθρωπος, the *former* man. But the Greek gives no sanction in this respect. Παλαιός is ancient, and in a bad sense obsolete; it refers not to time that is indefinitely past, as does πρότερος, but to time

¹ Rom. vii. 23.

² Rom. viii. 7.

³ Eph. iv. 22.

which is very old indeed, and to things archaic and outworn—anachronisms in a new order and a new day. In the Epistle to the Ephesians we find the two words used together, each in its proper significance. “Put off, concerning your former conversation, the old man.”¹ “Abandon,” that is, “your former habit of living according to an ancient and now quite obsolete principle.” The distinction is no mere verbal quibble, but the suggestion of a point of view of some importance to the interpretation of Pauline doctrine. It is occasionally brought against the Apostle that he did not anticipate the modern doctrine of evolution, as applied to the human soul. But in this expression we seem to have traces of the evolutionary idea, for the injunction to “put off” the old man is meaningless unless he be the product of an evolution that is past, and therefore an anachronism in the evolution that is in progress. His age, rather than his nature, is the thing against him; he is not the evil man, but the obsolete, and must now give place to him for whom he has prepared the way, in obedience to the universal truth that a forerunner who knows not how to decrease becomes a dangerous block to the road of progress.

The old man must die at his full age, neverthe-

¹ Eph. iv. 22.

less his day has been found necessary, and he may not die until that day be ripe. That he should have attained, in the Providence of God, to old age, is significant of the part he has had to play in that slow begetting of the race which is even yet in its rude beginnings. May we not, then, legitimately ask concerning the function in evolution of this Obsolete Man, whose age, in a universe of purpose, is the guarantee of his former usefulness? The Apostle gives us his origin; he is "of the earth, earthy."¹ An ancient product of earth, or matter—such seems to be the obvious meaning of this expression, which warrants us at least in suggesting that this old opposer of the spiritual life is the outcome of an evolution, former in time, but young in degree, which provided the material basis of the later manifestations of the human spirit. The Obsolete Man, in short, is the man of form and matter, the centre of forces which hold the spirit in the sphere of material life. His pull is entirely centrifugal, his path the downward curve that marks the involution of life in forms of ever-increasing density. How many ages have gone to his making who can say, nor through what strange mutations of animal form he has passed on his way to the present? Of his great function in evolution, however, we

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 47.

are assured when we reflect that the Obsolete Man has given the Spirit a basis for its operations in a physical universe.

But having done that, his work is over. He may provide a vehicle, but he may not crush the life within ; he may serve as ballast to the volatile Spirit, but he may not so weight it that it cannot leave the earth. He is a garment which, to use the expressive Pauline phrase, must be "put off." But in what sense are we to understand this injunction ? Not, surely, that the spiritual man is to be independent of form and vesture. Παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος is, as we have said, strictly the Obsolete Man, and to be obsolete is to have outgrown one's usefulness. Form and matter, as such, we do not need to be assured, have not outgrown their usefulness, but they have tended to much that is no longer pertinent to the needs of the growing, spiritual entity. What, then, we have to put off is not the man, but his archaisms ; not form, but the evils appertaining to form ; not matter, but the material eye and the fleshly heart. We have to deal with an element which is "corrupt by reason of the desires of deceit,"¹ or the "desires that deceive"—an element which, like all things of corruption and decay, was once harmless, fresh, and undefiled. Each of the works of the Old

¹ Eph. iv. 22.

Man just quoted will be found, on examination, to consist in a prostitution of some human passions and instincts that are not only harmless in themselves, but are necessary to the maintenance of life in material being.

Now, it is a universally acknowledged principle that an element of the natural order which has outgrown its first usefulness and become obsolete, invariably tends to actual corruption and decay. Hence the lower self in most men has passed from merely being lower into an old age of active opposition to the highest interests of the New Man. The "evil" characteristics of the carnal nature arise from its being no longer in line with the needs of the developing Ego. It is corrupt because it is an anachronism, the product of an evolution that is past.

We are tempted at first sight to question the wisdom of Nature in thus allowing a rudimentary principle to persist beyond its term of usefulness. But a deeper reflection will show *that only as the Old Man becomes "corrupt," i.e. obsolete, does he really become of use to the awakened spirit.* This appears to be a contradiction of our former statement; the paradox, however, is not difficult to reconcile. Nature shows a fine economy in this matter of the persistence of the Old Man. In his healthy youth he was necessary for the building of body; in his

old age he is used as a spur to the activities of spirit.

At the time when the animal was young and undefiled, the New Man, though always in being, had hardly shown above the horizon of material life. The mind, still less the spirit, was not then matched against the lower self in anything approaching an equal contest. But as soon as the new, the true man, a "ray of the Creator's own love and beauty," came to inhabit the slowly prepared organism, a new standard arose which passed judgment of evil on tendencies of the animal nature that had hitherto been part of the natural order. In other words, the animal principle was healthy and natural so long as it existed alone. But as the sun rose, the shadows were strengthened; as the spirit grew into adolescence, the animal grew into corruption and old age. For corruption is the animal's maturity. The sins of the Pauline category are the highest developments of the carnal nature, in the commission of which it is following the one law of its being. Obviously, ages are needed for this result, so that the animal man must be "old" before it is at the height of its carnal possibilities. At this point it is no longer fit to be the co-partner of the New Man, and is pronounced obsolete by the new law of the spirit whose direction and goal is the

converse of the old law of the flesh. To abandon the path of the carnal nature is now the task of the growing New Man just rising into manifestation, for only in *and through abandonment can the spirit grow*. Hence appears what seems like a paradox, but is in reality a very simple statement of fact, that the obsolete, the corrupt stage of the animal, is the stage of his greatest usefulness. For abandonment implies struggle, and struggle is the indispensable agent of moral growth.

We are dealing with a twofold and opposite evolution in man, a parallel and contrary movement of the New Man towards his goal in spirit, and the Old Man towards his goal in flesh. It is a well-known fact that the power which nourishes a garden of fair seeds will also fertilise the noxious weeds that lurk in its unseen places. Both tares and wheat grow together until the harvest, for the life of the one is the life of the other, the measure of the growth of the wheat being the measure also of the strength of the tares; both stand or fall together. Hence the need of wisdom in dealing with opposites which are related no less peculiarly and subtly because they are opposed; hence, too, the profound warning of Jesus, "Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares ye root up also the wheat with them."¹

¹ Matt xiii. 29-30.

The "time of harvest" is the ripeness of the human wheat, its *δικαιοσύνη*, when, stimulated by the parallel growth of the carnal nature, it attains the end for which it was sown. In the "harvest" opposites are reconciled. The tares, it is true, are gathered into bundles to be burned, but not before all that they did, or helped to do in the way of stimulus by opposition, has passed for all time into the fulness of the garnered grain.

To speak of evolution as the simple movement in an upward straight line of a single principle, is to state but half the truth, and therefore to misstate the whole. Evolution is the upward and downward movement of one and the same force, (apparently differentiated), at one and the same time ; hence its complexity, hence the serious and eternal struggle between elements of the nature which seem to be different in essence, because they are different in direction. "These things are contrary the one to the other," and, being contrary, they are therefore indispensable, for both directions are needed to make the perfect sphere.

There will be no difficulty here if it is remembered that the Spirit depends for manifestation upon the interaction of the opposites ; the New Man cannot develop his inherent greatness without the resisting agency of the carnal mind. Warfare is the

first necessity of his being. But he may never entirely rid himself of his foe on this plane, because the Old Man is the root-force of life in a material embodiment, and as such he cannot be utterly destroyed. The essence of the carnal mind must persist if man is to work out his destiny in terrestrial conditions. If it were not for those developments of the Obsolete Man which are commonly regarded as "evil," no contest between spirit and matter would be permissible or even possible ; for to attack what, apart from its excesses, is merely the necessary basis of life in material being, is tantamount to committing bodily suicide. If, then, the Old Man were to pass from the stage of evolution ere old age had rendered him formidable in lower tendencies, the New Man, who grows only by brave and successful encounters, would be deprived of the wherewithal to whet his sword. The corruptions and overgrowths of the animal principle, therefore, have their legitimate place in a universe of purpose.

It is necessary to recognise the fact that the Old Man's corruptions in their *grosser* form may be, and generally are, prevented by the New Man from coming to complete fruition, since the *tendency* to corruption is sufficient to serve as a resisting agency, without the ripening of tendency into act. Indeed, the Old Man reveals his true

nature in very subtle ways ; his most frequent guise is that of an angel of light. We shall mislead ourselves, therefore, if we associate his manifestations exclusively with the carnal sins. He is our enemy because, having been once ourselves, he continually seeks to revive in us that prehistoric identity. He has, indeed, no lower form of corruption than that of the beguiler.

We linger still on the old track which once we trod, and covet its easy descent, in spite of the higher knowledge that henceforth our road "winds uphill all the way, right to the very end." And yet, from the view-point of the whole cycle of life, we could not have been where we now are but for the downward curve that constitutes the path of the Old Man. To preserve the whole circle, we must also preserve that curve ; it has so to be brought into relation with the new and opposite line of the Spiritual Man as to make of the twain one perfect sphere. Can this be done? The "Rightness of God," which is St Paul's great declaration to humanity, answers the question in a triumphant affirmative. It is another term for the Christ-state, which is fundamentally and primarily the harmony and reconciliation of the conflicting opposites both in man and the universe. He who has attained this tremendous possibility has "overcome the world," that great opposite of

the Kingdom of Heaven which has yet to be brought within the pale of its contrary, and made to yield up its powers and experiences to the Ruler of the Kingdom. For we find it symbolically stated that the "kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into the New Jerusalem,"¹ which is the state of the Spiritual Man. This Orientalism illustrates the basal thought of our study—that the world-principle, the Old Adam, persists, in the perfect state, *in balance*, its incidental evils transmuted, its essential elements preserved as integral parts of the Divine Order, which is the absolute reconciliation of heaven and earth in a higher tertium, the New Creation.

¹ Rev. xxi. 24.

CHAPTER III

THE "OLD MAN." (*B. MICROCOSMIC.*) THE "ADAM"

THE "Old Man" has been exemplified on the concrete plane by the Apostle under the term Adam, and to many minds the pith of Pauline theology lies in the existence of this personality as an historical fact. The allusions to him in the Epistles are too scanty to enable us to state with any degree of certainty the views of St Paul with regard to the strict historicity of the Genesis story. The probability is that he accommodated his teaching to the current views of outer Judaism, at the same time holding the philosophical interpretation of the mystic and esoteric schools of his day, with which, as a Pharisee, he was bound to have come into contact. This is the position which the "Adam" references in the Epistles most readily support. Of these four references, Rom. v. 12-19; 1 Cor. xv. 22; 45; 1 Tim. ii. 13-14 (if we may assume the latter to be

genuine), two appear to require an interpretation on the ordinary historic plane, and two to demand an entirely different reading. Although each allusion is capable of a mystical treatment, the two in 1 Cor. xv. have so obviously a generic and impersonal intention that we remove them at once, and without hesitation, from the strict plane of the letter. Whatever the "Adam" may mean, he is not the human progenitor of the popular story.

The Apostle was no literalist. His training in the schools of the Rabbis had familiarised him with the use of the allegorical method in dealing with Old Testament narrative; on one occasion (Gal. iv. 24) he not only adopts this line of interpretation, but distinctly states that he does so. We have not the same assurance with regard to his treatment of the Adam myth, but it is safe to assume provisionally that the allegorical method is employed in this case also, from the fact that such method yields us teaching that fills a needed place in the body of Pauline doctrine. The teaching of the "Adam" is an item of such importance to the philosophy as a whole, that many students who can no longer accept its basis in a literal reading of Genesis i., ii., find themselves on the horns of a dilemma, having either to relegate the doctrine to the limbo of an outgrown

absurdity, or to withdraw one of the main key-stones from the structure of Apostolic thought. But if by a cautious use of the allegorical method we can deduce a meaning that shall be at once consistent with the kind of ideas already existing in the Apostle's mental entourage, and elucidatory of otherwise insoluble difficulties, we shall have avoided the dilemma altogether. No one felt more truly than the great Apostle that the "letter killeth"; no one has been more ruthlessly done to death by the very literalism to which he was so persistent a foe.

The systematic mind of St Paul would probably seek to embody the generic Adam in an historical personality, as the antithesis to a generic Christ embodied in an historical Jesus. Be that as it may, we shall deal more fully with Adam under his so-called "historical" aspect in the chapter on Sin; at present we have to sense the deeply mystical thought of St Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 22, 45 :¹ "And so it is written, The first man Adam

¹ "We are led to infer that in the Augustinian interpretation of this passage (1 Cor. xv. 22, 45-49), even if it agree with the letter of the text, too little regard has been paid to the extent to which St Paul uses figurative language, and to the manner of his age in interpretations of the Old Testament. The difficulty of supposing him to be allegorising the narrative of Genesis is slight, in comparison with the difficulty of supposing him to countenance a doctrine at variance with our first notions of the moral nature of God. He is arguing, we see, *κατ'ανθρωπον*, and taking his stand on the received opinions of his time. Do

became a living soul ; the last Adam a life-giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth earthy ; the second man is of heaven."

This passage shows the Apostle to have been in touch with a line of thought which the present day almost entirely discredits. The requirements of a modern theological degree do not include a knowledge of Kabbalah, in spite of the fact that we have many expressions of the Father of Christian Theology which indicate an acquaintance with Kabalistic methods of interpretation. I Cor. xv. 45 may have referred to a portion of the written Kabbalah which some scholars have traced to the beginning of the first century ; but we are inclined to think, from an important variation from Kabalistic teaching presently to be noticed, that the unknown writer of the quotation was, like the Apostle, a thinker familiar with, though not literally following, the esoteric tradition of the Rabbis. To understand these mystical allusions to the "Adams," we must glance for

we imagine that his object is no other than to set the seal of his authority on these traditional beliefs? The whole analogy, not merely of the writings of St Paul but of the entire New Testament, would lead us to suppose that his object was not to reassert them, but to teach through them a new and nobler lesson."—Jowett, *The Epistles of St Paul*, vol. ii. pp. 166–167.

a moment at the details of that tradition with regard to the doctrines of the "Creation" and the "Fall." And first concerning the tradition itself.

Much uncertainty still remains as to the date of such fragments of *written* Kabbalah as are now left to us. The general view of those who do not regard the whole theology as a farrago of thirteenth century nonsense is that the esoteric tradition was for the first time crystallised into a written system by Rabbi Schimeon Ben Jochai, at the end of the first century, with the addition of such overgrowths of the original doctrine as are inevitable to every attempt to popularise what, from its very nature, appertains to the Arcanum of things. The essence of the Kabbalah was probably of immemorial age, and was not combined into a theology before the return of the Jews from captivity. Though some of it had escaped, from time to time, from rigid, esoteric control, no one had dared to commit it to writing before the Rabbi Ben Jochai and his disciples collated the celebrated work termed the Zohar.

Now the ancient Kabbalah, as far as it can be disentangled from modern travesties, taught many things concerning "Adam," from many points of view, among them being the associa-

tion of the first man with humanity rather than with a person.

According to the Kabbalah, the first two chapters of Genesis set forth the creation of "Adam" or man as an evolutionary process, of which four definite stages may be noted. The origin of the process is the Logos Himself; its final stage is that of humanity in the flesh. Both St Paul and the writer he quotes are certainly aware of this teaching, of which we find traces in the expressions above referred to, the "first Adam," the "last Adam." The Apostle does not, however, follow the order of the fourfold generation, for reasons which he states in 1 Cor. xv. 45. His difference from the Kabbalistic tradition will form the main point of our present study of the "Adam." Let us examine the extent of his indebtedness to the old teaching.

The primitive tradition that "Adam" fell implies, of necessity, that he was once unfallen. In this state he is called in the Kabbalah the First, or archetypal Adam, the Heavenly Man, who is an ethereal manifestation of the highest Spirit in a body of celestial light, the light of the "Eden" world, in which matter, as we know it, has no place. This "first Adam," the Kadmon, enshrined a profound mystery. He is of the Cosmic rather than of the individual order, and represents not a

man but a hierarchy of Divine Beings, high creative Energies, who dwell in the spiritual world, forever unfallen, the pure Archetypes of the men that are to be. In the Jewish tradition these Beings are the highest orders of Elohim or Sephira, who subsequently manifest in ten groups or degrees, of which the first three pertain to the region of Archetypes, and are termed collectively the "first Adam."¹ They are the Logos who is the Light of the world, and has control of all things; and the "God" of the first chapter of Genesis; they are also the very root and essence of man. It is they who "make man in our (their) image,"² thus giving a portion of their angelic life to form the substance of the new creation.

From them come the lower seven Sephira, or creative Elohim, who build the material world, and are the *direct* precursors of the humanity in whom they subsequently incarnate. The Kabbalah terms them variously the "second Adam," and the "Divine Hermaphrodite," and makes them identical with the androgyne Adam of Gen. v., of whom we read: "in the likeness of God made he him, male and female created he them; and called *their* name Adam."³ They are the "Lord God" of Gen. ii.

¹ Schöttgen i. 512-514, 670-673.

² Gen. i. 26.

³ Gen. v. 1-2.

These Elohim project in their turn an image of themselves, who becomes the "Adam" in the third stage of creation, he who was made "of the dust of the ground," and placed in the "garden eastward in Eden."¹ In him the "second Adam," or creative Elohim, seek a material embodiment. Though androgyne, as are his prototypes, the Angelic Host, he is yet a stage nearer the material plane, being clothed not with the light of Eden, but with its "dust," the matter of its lower levels. He is thus connected by a direct spiritual heredity with the first, perfect, unfallen Adam Kadmon, the Divine Logos, through the creative Elohim who are the image or reflection of the Logos in a state of more clouded glory. Through the Elohim, too, he receives the "breath of life"² (*nephesh*), or animal instincts and vitality, which leads him ultimately to find expression in terrestrial matter; and the "living soul" (*mind*), or *Neschamah*, which links him to his angelic part. He is not only *a* man, but a humanity, and a humanity still androgyne and still ethereal. The "earth" is not the earth we know.

Finally, the last and lowest state of the race is reached when the separated man and woman emerge after the deep sleep of the androgyne Adam (*Gen. ii. 23*). Sex separation appears to be the precursor of that earthly birth which follows as a

¹ *Gen. ii. 7-8.*

² *Gen. ii. 7.*

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consequence of the mystic "transgression," and is symbolised by the clothing of the guilty pair in coats of skin (Gen. iii. 21-24). With the loss of Eden commences human life on this terrestrial sphere; all that went before was pre-material as we understand matter, and comprised untold ages, as we count time. The first two chapters of Genesis are, in short, the record of a vast cycle of transformations by which the race has passed from the ethereal state to the material, from universal to individual, from spiritual creation to physiological begetting. We can make the different stages clearer by categorising them thus :

I. Divine Prototype of

Man =

The Logos, or Adam Kadmon, the "God" of Gen. i. He is collectively the three highest groups of the ten Sephira or Elohim. He (or they) bestows the Ruach, or Spirit in man.

II. Creative Elohim, or lower seven Sephira =

The "Second Adam," Lords of Creation and of man, who bestow on him the nephesh (breath of life), and fashion his body from the "dust." The "Lord God" of Gen. ii.

III. Adam made of the
dust of the ground = The product and embodiment of the Creative Seven (Adam-Eve, androgyne).¹

IV. Adam and Eve = The androgyne man separated into distinct sexes. Birth into physical world.

With the old record, as interpreted by the Kabbalah, science may be at peace, for Genesis deals not with phenomena, but with archetypes. Its world is that inner, causal department of the universe "in which was fashioned every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew"²; where lie the roots and beginnings of the great Cosmic process which, for many men, is terrestrial in origin and mechanical in nature. Whatever be the truth concealed by the broken, and often chaotic symbolism of ancient traditions, it is of great value as testimony

¹ Cf. *Divine Pymander* of Hermes Trismegistus: "This is the mystery that to this day was hidden. Nature being mingled with the Heavenly Man (Elohim), brought forth a wonder—seven men, all males and females (hermaphrodite)—according to the nature of the seven governors" (the seven Hosts of Elohim) (*Divine Pymander*, ii. 29). The old traditions used the term "man" in a collective sense. Under the symbolism of the "Seven Kings of Edom" the Kabbalah teaches the birth of man in seven simultaneous groups, corresponding with the seven creative Hosts, their progenitors. (Compare *Zohar*; *Siphra Dtzenioutha*; *Idra Suta*, 2928; Franck, *La Kabbale*, p. 205.)

² Gen. ii. 5.

to the declaration of Idealism that the world of causes is the world of Spirit. The records of this world, moreover, having reference to a plane other than the terrestrial and physical, were never meant to run on all fours with modern science, as "reconcilers," past and present, have found, and will continue to find, to their cost. We may join with the majority of theologians in ignoring the mystical method of interpretation ; nevertheless it helps to make straight the crooked places of Scripture, and of those, in a marked degree, of the Apostle Paul. The passages we have quoted, for example, bear a closer relation to the foregoing than mere coincidence of terms. "And so it is written, The first man, Adam, became a living soul ; the last Adam a life-giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural ; then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth earthy ; the second man is of heaven."

But the chief point to be emphasised here is St Paul's variation of the order of development from the Kabalistic and Scriptural tradition, for it is of some importance philosophically. The story in Genesis deals with a portion of the process of Creation, commencing with its outbirth from God, and ending with its embodiment in physical matter. St Paul's theology starts at the point at

which Genesis ceases, and moves forward and onward to the height at which Genesis began. The reason for this is plain. Genesis gives but a fragment of the whole revelation of man. It deals with the starting-point of an evolution, St Paul with the finishing-point of an evolution. *The Apostle's* "first Adam," the Adam of the Kabalistic third stage in creation, is, as it were, the product in a descending ratio of the powers of the Adam on the divine and spiritual planes; he represents the gradual densification of the race as it neared the point of sex-separation, and the "coats of skin." In the androgyne Adam the process towards "terrestrialisation," if we may be allowed the word, had reached the stage of the "breath of life" (the animal *Nephesh*), and the "living soul," or mind (*Neschamah*); only the sex-element and the physical body were needed to fit the Adam for his last "descent" to the physical plane. Previous to the inbreathing of the *Nephesh*, man had dwelt on the divine and spiritual regions of the universe, where his nature was pure Ruach (spirit), ethereal, inherently perfect—but wanting in the strength that comes only from evil vanquished, matter experienced to the uttermost. To gain this he "falls"; contracting his native powers into the limitations of a molecular envelope; folding away his "garment of

light"; losing, after the "deep sleep" of Lethe, the memory of "that Imperial Palace whence he came."¹

He is destined to return ; to find once again his true centre in the *Ruach* nature, which is both his Alpha and Omega, his archetype and end ; to be not only "living," but "life-giving," a transmitter in his turn of the spiritual germ to races that are yet to come. At present he has lost sight of the archetypal self, having "become" *Neschamah-Nephesh*, the mind linked with the flesh-nature. But let us turn to the passage under consideration—"the first Adam became a living soul,"—and observe the force of the verb. "*Eγενετο*" implies the passing of the essential self into relations of time, space, and matter. The soul in "becoming" does not first begin to *be* ; it first begins to *manifest*. It is no longer the angel clothed in light, but the angel in contact with the world of sense, and the body of "dust" and desire. The Kabbalah taught that the angel-nature is man's true and imperishable essence.

¹ "This doctrine seems to have been in its origin part and parcel of the Chaldæan mystery-tradition ; but it was spread in Hellenistic circles, and had analogies in all the great mystery-traditions."—*Thrice Greatest Hermes*, G. R. S. Mead, vol. i. p. 138.

St Paul, in basing his theology upon it, is merely following his predecessors in thought. The doctrine was also "in the air" of his own time.

Humanity is the Elohim incarnate in mortal frames, and it can never cease to be what it *is*, however completely the "shades of the prison-house" may obscure the lineaments of the Divine Image. This teaching may possibly have been at the root of the famous saying of Jesus: "their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven"¹; it being more than probable that He was learned in Rabbinical tradition, and that He would avail Himself of all that was precious and true in that immemorial storehouse of fact, myth, fancy, and legend, which was His countrymen's most revered possession.

Be that as it may, the ancient Jewish teaching in which St Paul was evidently instructed, recognised a broad, twofold evolution of man under the symbolism of the "first" and "second Adam." In the passage before us (1 Cor. xv. 45), the "living soul" and the "life-giving spirit" represent the beginning and the end of a progressive development by which *Ruach*, the Heavenly Man, learns to know himself as consciously divine, and the controller of all the lower conditions to which for his training he has been temporarily subjected. He, the "first Adam" of a dim Edenic past, in which his high powers were infolded, awaiting education in matter, has eventu-

¹ Matt. xviii. 10.

ally to become the "last Adam" of an evolution in material conditions from which he is to emerge triumphantly self-realised, the imperishable possessor of what has been his in latency from the beginning, the heavenly powers of the Heavenly Man.

We have no clue to the origin of this truly inspired quotation in which St Paul sets forth his great hope for the race. The sentence is probably from one of the numerous Apocalyptic and mystical works which were laid under contribution at that time by many writers now deemed orthodox. That the standpoint is Apocalyptic is indicated by both verbs being in the past tense; the writer is evidently one who spoke from the vision of the end as an *attained reality*, and from the view of Creation as a mighty process, the passing of the archetype into the finished work. To him man *had* "become" what he *is*; the result was inevitable and sure, by reason of the Power infolded in Evolution from "Times Eternal."

On this high future of the "last Adam," the "Adam" in his final stage, the Apostle holds his spiritual gaze. He is called to proclaim a Gospel which he defines as the "power of God unto salvation." But what is salvation? Obviously, among other things, salvation is the state of the "New Man," the rebirth in the individual of that

high, first creation of Gen. i., which the Kabalists symbolise in the Adam Kadmon. Salvation, according to one of the meanings of its beautiful Greek equivalent, *σώτηρια*, is a "safe return" (e.g. *ἡ οἰκάδῃ σωτηρία*, "a safe return home"). We can give the word no wider or more suggestive rendering, including, as it does, the lower meanings of safety, deliverance, and a hurt made whole, with the infinitely profounder suggestion of restoration, finality, and a goal attained. Because St Paul is devoted to the Gospel of the "safe return," he makes his whole theology converge to that, as end. He is more or less unconcerned with the first or downward bend of the spiritual cycle, which he takes for granted; his work belongs to the dispensation of the "Return," of which the Gospel of the "power of God" is to be the effectual agent. His "first Adam," therefore, is the state of humanity in the flesh, the "body of this death"; his "last Adam" the state of humanity in the Spirit.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW MAN (*A. MACROCOSMIC, OR UNIVERSAL.
THE SPIRITUAL NATURE, THE MYSTIC CHRIST*).

WE have now dwelt with the Obsolete Man and his microcosm, the Adam of Gen. i. and ii. What now of the other term in the antithesis, him to whom the "Adam" is opposed in the necessary warfare of flesh and spirit?

It is a significant fact concerning the whole series of antitheses in the Epistles that the terms of each are unequal, something of Heaven being invariably set over against something of earth. "We wrestle not," says the writer, "against flesh and blood"; ours is a contest of different planes, different natures, and different lines of progress. Our second term, then, will be the converse in all respects of the first; yet, because it is of another level and order of being, we shall find it incapable of being strictly defined. We may say, speaking generally, that whereas the fruits of the "Old Man" are distinguished by elements of disruption

and the densifying of the Spirit, the fruits of the "New Man" exhibit the forces that make for unity and the suppression of the flesh-nature. I wish to make it clear at the outset that the term "New Man" has reference to a *state* rather than to a person, it being the goal of all persons, as well as the mystic background in which personality meets and blends with the Super-Person. The New Man, Spirit, Heaven, Grace, call it by what term we will—and St Paul employs all these—is strictly the *ὑπόστασις*, or foundation of all things. He has been involved from the beginning in that early evolution that has given us the "Old Man" and his doings ; his manifestations only are ever new, and the crowning product of all previous growth. Nothing that is of Heaven can be strictly "new," since Heaven is *οὐσία*, the original substratum of all things ; so the New Man, if considered in the light of his origin, is the most ancient thing in a timeless universe. He is the "Lamb slain before the foundation of the world" ;¹ the "Word by whom all became" ;² the "Light that lighteth every man" ;³ and yet his every manifestation is a new creation, bringing to birth hopes, principles, forces, ideals, intrinsically foreign to the forms in which they arise.

The relation between the New Man and the Old,

¹ Rev. xiii. 8.

² John i. 3.

³ John i. 9.

between the Spirit which is timeless, changeless, and yet ever-coming, and the humanity into which it comes, is one of the profoundest aspects of our study. To state this relation in some, at least, of its far-reaching results is not, of course, to arrive at the solution of its mystery, though it is perhaps all that the human mind can attempt at our present stage of knowledge. For the problem, as we have seen, is rendered additionally complicated by the terms of the contrasts not being on the same plane of reality. The antithesis, Old Man and New, involves others of ever-increasing width of generalisation. Included within it are such opposites as Appearance matched against Reality ; Manifestation in Time against Being in Eternity ; and so hard is it to reconcile contrasts of which one side seems to hold a monopoly of being, that we are almost tempted to cut the Gordian knot of the difficulty by the entire negation of the human term in the antithesis. This, however, we may not do, from the indisputable fact that this term *has* its own modicum of reality. Appearances, however hard it may be to explain them, *actually appear*. Phenomena exist *as phenomena*. For us they are ; and we, as noumena, are unintelligible save as we oppose ourselves thereto. In other words, the human term in our series of antitheses is the absolutely indispensable contrast-

effect by which alone the spiritual term may be known.

The New Man, then, is of Eternity, but we cannot know Him save as He is related to time. The Gospel of Paul announced His day, that it was at hand—nay, that it had been already born ; but after two thousand years we still strain our eyes for His coming. The reason for this lies in an imperfect realisation of the nature of Him who shall come, owing to the difficulty, just stated, of balancing concepts appertaining to different levels of thought.

The New Man is beyond the pale of time, as the Old Man is of time's very essence. Evolution through a period of millennia, or cycles of millennia, cannot produce Him. He is independent of growth : He cannot be made by heaping experience on experience, or by struggling along the stony path of works. Evolution at most can but prepare for the recognition of Him where He has ever been—in the to-day of every human life, and the immediacy of every human experience. He is not anything of which it may be said : "Lo, here," or "Lo, there," because He manifests Himself from out of a timeless Omnipresence, as a spring whose source is inexhaustible and the same, but whose waters are new from moment to moment. He does not "happen" or "arrive" ;

He is as truly now the central fact of man and of the world as though the age were heaven, and all men heaven-like. The message of His presence came and passed, and the men who looked for Him as a time product, the result of the promise of ages, looked in vain, as they are looking still, because they sought a future rather than a ripe and realised Now. But the New Man, being of Eternity, is of no one aspect of time beyond another. He is that which links all the aspects into one vast stream of partless human experience : He is the root of the past, the strength of the present, the hope of the future, and yet remains Himself the Master and Source of time, the resting-place of changelessness behind the march of an age-long process.

To enter into His new day demands the intense intellectual conviction that that day already *is*, and is a condition to be appropriated by affirmation, rather than to be striven for by the usual methods of acquisition. We may not create the New Man, but we may *call Him into manifestation*. His appearance awaits certain divinely appointed conditions, not the least important of which is the intuitive recognition of Him as the One Reality and the One Perfection, now, everywhere, always, and from all time. He always *is* ; but fulfil conditions, and He *comes*.

These conditions are various, and not always easy either to determine or obey ; but they are provided, for the most part, by the great elemental law which makes evolution depend on the balance of conflicting Opposites, and which consequently demands that the Perfect State, the state of the "Rightness of God," shall be an attained reconciliation between the limitations of the Old Man, and the high possibilities of the New. For the Spiritual Man can emerge into the region of the normal self only as he is opposed by the limitations inevitable to the sense-consciousness. He whose true habitat is the centre of all life must radiate also to the periphery, if he would express in completeness the powers that are his *in potentiality*. The spirit is incomplete until it has attained full self-utterance. Hence it seeks conflict *because it seeks manifestation*; the one is the condition of the other. It is not difficult to see how this must be. The "hidden man of the heart" cannot be made to appear without being first placed over against that which, in essence, he is not. The Higher Self, for example, may reveal an essential quality such as wisdom, only as He first finds ignorance as the means to a contrast-effect. Wisdom is unintelligible, unthinkable, without the opposite by and through which it is revealed. Hence it is through the play of

the great elemental antitheses that emerge the hidden energies of the New Man whose impulse is ever to express, and so to possess Himself in ultimate fulness of being.

But the New Man, though immanent in the race as the ground of its great assurance, is as yet a hope rather than a realisation. He points on, as it were, to an Ideal Humanity which, though existing already, "eternal in the heavens," still awaits universal *manifestation*. A Specimen of it has been already manifested. For St Paul, Jesus presaged the "Christ that is to be," as the First-Fruits presage the final Harvest. Jesus is a harbinger, yet He is also the Son of Man—a product. That is to say: the Divine Sonship revealed by Him, and as yet unrealised in the race as a whole, will be born of the divers experiences of men; humanity is the womb that will bear it, and the conflicting forces that compose humanity are the strange yet vital currents of its life. The title, Son of Man, given by the Type of the higher humanity to Himself, is thus the suggestion of a truth too profound for proclamation on the house-tops—that the race is even now conceiving the Christ that is to be, and conceiving Him, too, in conditions which are superficially regarded as leading to His destruction, rather than to His birth. For man,

though essentially divine, is yet the meeting-point of dark and alien elements, appertaining to the universe on its nether side. *Demon* and *Deus* having united to form him, his whole life from the cradle to the grave is the expression of the elemental antagonism of forces whose true meaning lies in their being mutually opposed. If this be man, then the Son of Man, the New Creation, must be the Son of struggle, sorrow, and sin unnamable. Conceived in the world's dark places, His growth will be a cramped and tortured progress through the hells of the race's infancy. Is He the immaculate, the heaven-born, begotten, not made, "being of one substance with the Father"? That is true, but not all the truth. For both heaven and earth are His parents; of light and of darkness is He born, this fair and perfect product of elements whose coming together in strife has ultimate issue in the Son of Peace. Such is one of the mysteries of the Son of Man, the "Christ that is to be." He is the race's hope, and is even now in the bosom of the Father, though He suffers on earth the painful process of the world's growth. He is the New Man, at present an embryo in the womb of humanity, but destined to come forth in all the gladness of a "New Creation." We see Him epitomised, foreshadowed in Jesus, and take

courage. For He, and a humanity such as He, represent the end and purpose of the world-process, and so high a consummation justifies all.

This thought is suggested by the Apostle in a strange and interesting metaphor. Adam, he says, referring to the historic microcosm and symbol of the Old Man, is a "figure of him who shall come."¹ In its present translation this is manifestly nonsense, for the Adam of the Eden story was in no way a type, but rather an opposite, of the Christ whose career was a purposive manifestation of unlikeness to His supposed prototype. But the better translation would be: a "mould of the future man" (τύπος τοῦ μέλλοντος). Τύπος is a mould into which something is poured for purposes of impression, and the metaphor at once adapts itself with great nicety to our view of the purpose in evolution of the Old and New Men, and their mutual hostility. For a mould is in every respect the opposite of the impression that is to be produced from it; concavity in the mould is convexity in the impression; each is "contrary the one to the other," as the letters of a seal are upside down in relation to the stamp that appears. Moreover, the whole object of a mould or seal is that it shall be deserted by the fluid when the impression is set. Without total abandonment,

¹ Rom. v. 14.

there will be no impression. May we not, then, apply our analogy to the extent of regarding the "Adam" nature as in very truth the womb of the "Christ that is to be," the future Man, the "New Creation"? Out of this fierce alembic, St Paul assures us, something is to emerge; there will be "made of the twain one new man." What will be his characteristics, and how are we to know him when he comes? The answer to this question brings us to the second aspect of the subject, the New Man revealed in a microcosm.

CHAPTER V

THE NEW MAN. JESUS CHRIST (*B. MICROCOSMIC*).

ST PAUL did not attempt to define the New Man, because He had been already defined in a human personality. The central teaching of the Epistles was gathered around a central figure in whom the universal and abstract truth of the immanent Christ had found specific and concrete expression. Hence the Apostle saw in Jesus the embodiment and epitome of his whole Christology. It is true that the state of Universal Christhood is the teacher's objective and the crown of all his hopes, the new religion being largely a revelation of the "Christ in you, the hope of glory,"¹ which from time immemorial had formed the most jealously guarded secret of the higher mystery-cults. But St Paul's most effective method of preaching a state was by pointing to one in whom that state had been realised and embodied. He preached Christ as the goal of the developing "New Man" in every human

¹ Col. i. 27.

heart, and Jesus Christ as the mighty illustration, or object-lesson, of that transcendent teaching.

Christhood represented the destiny to which mankind had been moving since the first dawn of humanity on the planet. It was therefore the ceaseless strain and burden of Pauline thought. And in Jesus we see the living proof of what the Apostle sets forth in tense and laboured argument. He is the symbol and the fulfilment of that "hope of the soul, sure and steadfast," which had been hitherto exclusive and secret. The mysteries of Christian doctrine could be brought home to the slumbering intuitions of men only as they were lived out in actual flesh and blood. True, the world in general saw not the Master save as it was able to see Him. Nevertheless, to such as could see He had been present, and His promise was a closer revelation on the removal of His physical limitations. "A little while and ye shall not see Me" (Θεωρεῖτέ), "and again a little while and ye shall see Me" (ὄψεσθε),¹ reports the most spiritual of His chroniclers, who indicated by two words of widely varying significance that vision may be of different planes. We can, indeed, affirm, without pressing words too far, that the distortions which have marred the beauty of the Gospel almost from its first inception have been

¹ John xvi. 16.

the outcome of that earlier “Θεωρεῖτέ” vision, the vision of the formal mind, which should have given place ultimately to the more spiritual sight indicated by the word “ὁψεσθε.” St Paul was one of those who could see in the “ὁψεσθε” sense, and his aim was ceaselessly to awaken that vision in all who became Christian disciples. He saw the Master in many lights, some of which have proved a stumbling-block through all the past ages of Christendom, from disregard of the fact that the seeing was by spiritual vision, *transmitted*, in Jewish metaphor, *through the agency* of the formal mind. Some of these standpoints we will consider in detail.

St Paul sees his Master, first, as the Head of a new order, the First-Fruits of a Creation already in being, but yet to be evolved out of the toils and trials of the race. In this spiritual organism, the true Body of God, the temple of the Divine Indwelling, Christ is to be perfected and fulfilled, and His universal immanence is the link of solidarity that makes the members of the whole body the members also of each other.¹ To establish and proclaim this truth was the divine mission of Jesus. He *was* the Gospel of Rightness, because in Him it was represented and revealed. Only the Christ could reveal the

¹ Eph. iv. 25 ; Rom. xii. 5.

Christ : only He could disclose the mystery in whom that mystery had been manifested in fulness. To St Paul, therefore, Jesus was the objective of the new spiritual life that was dawning among men. All that the Apostle laboured to set before his converts as near possibilities of being, was in Him in full and radiant expression. If we accept the cardinal epistles on the whole as representing genuine relics of Apostolic teaching, it is hard to convince ourselves of what many students affirm, that St Paul preaches only an inward and universal Christ. To state this appears to rob his philosophy of half its power and cogency. He preaches the universal by and through the particular. Each pair of opposites, as we have endeavoured to show, falls under the two great categories of macrocosmic and microcosmic. General principles, universal laws, find by an inexorable logic their specific and particular counterparts. The world of being reflects itself always and everywhere in the world of becoming. When, therefore, the Apostle exhorts his converts to put off the Old Man, and live in a state of reconciled harmony with the Divine, he has before him the triumphant assurance of the living Christ that such harmony and newness of life were possible among men. In looking across the gulf of changed conditions which separates that age from this, it is difficult to

realise the height of hope and of vision which these letters to the Churches reveal. If words mean anything, then the hope of the Christian convert was an actual participation in the state of his Master. He looked for Christhood ; it was his by right of the solidarity that bound both master and disciple in a common life. What had been wrought in the one was equally the possession of all, since all are one. Therefore the Christ was regarded as the "first-born among many brethren";¹ therefore the measure of the stature of His fulness² was the promise, nay, the glory of certainty, for all who trod in His way. His mystic death, resurrection, and ascension — states of interior unfoldment of the Divine Spirit within Him, as well as happenings in an historic career—were to be claimed and shared by each member of the Mystic Body, for the common life of an organism was no more the property of the head than of the members ; each was equally necessary to all ; and the gains, even of the highest, were only possessed as they were shared with the lowest.

Here it may be necessary to avoid confusion in thought by a careful remembrance of the Apostle's double plane of teaching. Jesus is the Head or controlling principle in the Spiritual Body which the Gospel is slowly to fashion for the Divine

¹ Rom. viii. 29.

² Eph. iv. 13.

Indwelling, and unto Him the members are to grow up in all things. But the Divine Ensouler of the Body is the universal Christ (*χρίστος*), of whom Jesus the Christ was, for St Paul, the highest manifested expression. The distinction is not one of essence, but of function, and will pass when the consummation for which it was created is attained, and the Kingdom is "given up"¹—conquered for, and yielded to the One who shall be all, and in all. With this thought in mind, much that is otherwise confusing in the Apostolic writings becomes clear.

Arguing from the great truth of the spiritual unity of mankind in Christ, St Paul was led to utter words which theologians in later ages have distorted into the doctrines of substitution and "imputed righteousness," thereby jeopardising the higher verity by that greatest of falsities, a partial truth. Still, there is light behind the darkness of the worst theology-makers; they all builded better than they knew; and their errors had power because of the great Apostolic principle which was the ground of their misconception.

To St Paul the Christ was the manifestation of a condition in which the particular existed only in and for the universal, in which personal consciousness was transcended, and personal actions were

¹ I Cor. xv. 24.

illuminated by world-wide purposes ; the Apostle could therefore say with a grand literalness : " If one died for all, then were all dead." ¹ For the career of such an One, His moral grandeur, His very life, are the possession of mankind, by virtue of the link that exists between their potentiality and His attainment. Whatever may be the mystic meaning of the " dying of the Lord Jesus," ² a subject which we shall hope to treat in its proper place, the master-key of solidarity unlocks one of its greatest difficulties.

The Apostle, then, saw the Master as the Head of a slowly developing spiritual organism which foreshadowed the state of humanity at its climax, and provided a universal Body for the universal Christ. But this truth was incomplete without the complementary view of Jesus as a specific expression of the Logos of God. He was " God manifest in the flesh " by virtue of His being perfected man ; He was perfected man by virtue of His being a realised Christ.

But what is Christhood ? It is the unclouded manifestation of the Divine Spirit, the innermost Self of all men, in a suitably developed human personality. That Divine mystery is in all, awaiting its inevitable hour. It is independent of growth, development, or anything appertaining to

¹ 2 Cor. v. 15.

² 2 Cor. iv. 10.

process in time. Its instruments alone—the human personalities which are the ground of Its activity in matter—are on the time-plane, and for their education the time-plane in a great measure exists. The human vehicle of the Christ may have shared in the general line of development by which personality has been shaped, but the essence of Him, as of us, was “begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,” and was capable, therefore, of mirroring, in perfect miniature, the mystery of the Light whence He came forth. This, as it seems to us, is the truth underlying the story of His birth, which poetically indicates the perfect marriage of two natures—the human born of woman or matter, and subject to an immense process in time, and the Divine whose source is of the Highest alone. Only when these two are brought into eventual harmony; when the “image,” or human self, has grown to the likeness of the original, and the original has bent to the perfect fashioning of the image, can the “New Man” arise who is neither image nor original alone, but a “New Creation,” born of their perfect mating. One of the results of such wondrous “rightness” and balance of opposing natures will be the total loss of the separating faculty in personality. In the Christ-state the immanent Divinity in which all personality is

rooted becomes the conscious, glowing centre of the individual ; as far as one human being may focus and mirror the universal, the Christ not only represents, but is in very truth, the race incarnate. Universality is His sign-manual, the universal revealed in His consciousness, His claim, and His standpoint. A great mystery, truly, the grand "mystery of godliness,"¹ which a man may endeavour to live, but concerning which words are imbecile.

The Universal Spirit is ever striving to reflect Itself in the clear dew-drops of human souls ; hence the part may—nay, must—ultimately contain the whole, because there is in the strict nature of things no part, but only the whole eternally self-reproduced. Therefore the Apostle states concerning his great object-lesson in practical mysticism : "In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Divine Nature in a bodily manner" (the literal translation).² If this passage exhibits a difficulty on the ground that the whole cannot be contained within a human limitation, we may point out that the statement here is as to *mode*, rather than as to *quantity*. Indeed, the quantitative conception cannot strictly apply to the Divine, save as an accommodation to human thought. Spirit being independent of categories of extension,

¹ 1 Tim. iii. 16.

² 1 Col. ii. 9.

He who is "greater than the great" may be equally "smaller than the small." The Partless and Indivisible is whole and all wherever and however He may dwell, but His dwelling may vary as to mode. In the human race the dwelling is after a "bodily manner," or by way of an organ or medium by which the various planes of outer and inner are brought into reciprocal response. Therefore the end of human development is to render the bodily mode entirely adequate to the mighty purpose of its ordering. We have to further in ourselves the great "mystery of godliness" by aiding the responsiveness of our instruments, that the God who is ever seeking expression in and through us may not be foiled in His divine intent.

In such terms as the foregoing may we be permitted to think the unthinkable—that mystery of the Divine Indwelling which is expressed in all its fulness in the individual Christ. The One is continually making for Himself vehicles by which to fulfil His eternal thirst for expression. In man, His human vehicle, divine powers are awaiting expression—nay, in him is welling the very heart of the Fulness ; therefore man at his *climax*, man in whom the spiritual vesture (σῶμα πνευματικόν), which includes all vestures, has been perfectly fashioned, is the Spirit's most habitable and appropriate abode. We misuse words if we

describe the destiny of man as anything short of this. Man will fulfil his end only when he images without distortion the Invisible whence he came forth. It is impossible to over-emphasise the truth too long ignored by the accredited custodians of the Christian mystery, that the individual Christ, in His capacity of a Divine mirror or image, was so by virtue of His being man at his climax. If He were not an objective epitome of the Mystery which from all ages had been hid in God, the realisation of a Christhood which is the heritage of every son of man, the scheme and method of the Apostle's teaching has evaded us. For, so far as we are able to perceive, it was an ordered and philosophical teaching, in which the universal is revealed in and through the particular, and in which microcosm has no place save as it is the image and expression of macrocosm.

It had, moreover, mighty consequences on the practical plane. If, to St Paul, the Christ was one in whom the Fulness had found a dwelling-place, and the Invisible a mirror, what was his corollary from this great fact? He gives it in a prayer for his converts which reveals an almost unparalleled daring of vision and of utterance. "That ye may be filled even unto the fulness of God."¹ (the literal translation). Here we

¹ Eph. iii. 19.

have the completed Christ-teaching. The Apostle shows the Master to hold no power, to possess no fulness, which the disciple may not also share. The Fulness *shall* descend on man, because It is already moving within him towards the fashioning of a meet vessel. Human life exists but for this. Human life is (or should be) the slow rising of the Fulness in an ever-expanding reservoir. To be filled with the Fulness was the climax of Apostolic vision: "as He is, so are we in this world." Because the Christ was the first-fruits of a mighty, Cosmic process, the gathering of the aftermath was not only assured, but near. For that Day of the Lord, the Day of the manifestation of the Sons of God, not only St Paul, but the whole creation, waited and hoped.¹ The strength of the Apostle's far, spiritual vision saw it as close at hand, already above the horizon of the waning night. And who shall say how near he came to the truth concerning it, since the Day which brings the deep initiations of the soul is never really absent, being of the state wherein time and space are not, nor the illusions of incompleteness and of growth? That Day brings the Now from out of the Always-has-been, and its hour will be as a thief in the night, unknown even to the Christ when viewed in relation to time, but always

¹ Rom. viii. 19.

at hand to the seer who dwells on its confines. If in his earlier writings the Apostle materialised this Consummation in terms of a Jewish Apocalypse, in his later Epistles he gives it a more spiritualised tone.¹

Thus the two main views of St Paul with regard to his Master, viz. as representing humanity at its climax, and as being the pure Vehicle of the Word or Reason of God, are in very truth the corner-stone of the Gospel of Rightness which aims at the entire at-one-ing of the human and divine elements in man.

Jesus illustrated in a living perfection that balance or reconciliation of seemingly essential contrasts which nature and philosophy alike endeavour to establish and preserve. That the great spiritual equipoise was attainable points to the fact that there are in nature no really essential opposites. They proceed from Unity, they return to Unity, else were the universe a chaos of irreducible conflict. The radical Deism of Judaism—for in spite of its monolatry it was not truly monotheistic—had driven a wedge between the human and the divine, which twenty centuries of Christianity have left very largely untouched. In Jesus the wedge was entirely abolished; but only in rare exceptions and in small measure has Jesus ever been fully understood.

¹ Cf. 1 Thess. iv. 15-17; 2 Thess. i. 7-10; with Phil. iii. 20-21; Rom. viii. 18-23.

CHAPTER VI

NATURAL BODY. SPIRITUAL BODY

THE Adam, or Natural Man, and the Christ, or Spiritual Man, are each, as we have seen, essential principles of our complex nature. They have, moreover, their own appropriate vehicles of expression, which, no less than the "Men" themselves, are also part of the human economy. We are thus prepared for the Pauline assertion, "to each seed his own body,"¹ both the "seed" that is natural and the "seed" that is spiritual being clothed with a vesture that shall be in exact correspondence with the particular order of life which it is designed to accommodate. Hence the matter of the spiritual body will be spiritual, as the matter of the natural body will be natural.

The doctrine of the spirituality of matter is sometimes held to be the exclusive property of Eastern thinkers, or of those systems of thought in the West which have acknowledged an in-

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 38.

debtedness to Eastern Pantheism. But the Pauline student who has also some acquaintance with Eastern modes of thought is prepared to demonstrate that the father of Christian dogmatics, St Paul, was also among the teachers of the spirituality of what we call matter, and that without departing from a very rigid, not to say Jewish Theism. He suggests a relief to the great crux of scientific materialism—foreshadowed in his day by the problem, “How are the dead raised, with what body come they up?”—by asserting authoritatively that physical matter is not the only kind of matter in the universe. “There is a natural body (σῶμα ψυχικόν),” he says, “and there is a spiritual body (σῶμα πνευματικόν)” !¹

Now a careful development of this seed-thought would have delivered from much error certain minds who have been rightly convinced of the accuracy of the scientific contention that consciousness, and body or the substratum of consciousness, must co-exist. Realising truly that consciousness is eternally dependent upon matter for its active manifestation, they proceed to the false conclusion that the matter upon which consciousness depends is solely and essentially physical: hence the destruction of the physical body implies the destruction of the dependent consciousness. But

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 44.

inasmuch as consciousness is not necessarily of one state or degree, so matter is not necessarily of one state or degree. We now know more than St Paul presumably knew of the possibility of actually demonstrating the existence of matter in more attenuated states than the physical, yet even we are not able to advance upon his dogmatic statement that matter may be spiritual as well as natural. Let us consider the possibility of reconciling what to many minds is of the nature of a paradox.

We will begin by defining our terms.

Spirit we will regard as synonymous with consciousness in all its manifestations, from simple feeling and awareness upward to its highest expressions in thought, reason, will, love, devotion, spiritual aspiration. Beyond these are many elements which do not enter the normal field of human experience, but which are nevertheless awakening in some men, and awaiting their inevitable hour in all men. They relate to a Cosmic order of consciousness, in which the individual will ultimately realise his one-ness with the whole of being, and with God, the Source and the End. Obviously, to discuss in detail the aspects of the higher consciousness before it has yet become fully manifest in the race, is out of the question entirely ; it is of paramount importance, however, to bear in mind that the purpose

of Evolution is to make such manifestation not only possible but normal. Man has had his animal phase—he is in it yet ; he has entered upon his mental and higher emotional phase ; the next turn of the wheel brings him to his God-like phase, in which it doth not yet appear what he shall be. These three distinct, and yet inter-related aspects of his being show the development of consciousness in three progressive modes ; and although sensory consciousness, mental consciousness, and α , the unknown spiritual consciousness, are progressive aspects of one whole, nevertheless they represent and demand the existence of different organs, and correspond with different levels of material nature—and when we say *material* we do not, of course, confine our thought to *physical* matter.

So far this is compatible with what we already know. We find, as we should expect to find, that the matter which is adapted to simple, sensory phenomena is of a lower degree of specialisation than that which provides for the psychical elements in our experience. These latter elements are the outcome of consciousness working in matter that is nervous,—and something more,—electrical. May we not infer from this that advanced spiritual activity will demand a yet further development of the process of material specialisation—nay, that it is going on

now in every member of the race in whom the Old Adam has given place to the New Man? Spiritual matter we may therefore regard as matter specifically adapted to express the workings of consciousness in its highest spiritual aspects. In essence all matter is one; difference in kind results from the keying of the one *Ultima Thule* to different taxic rates, or vibratory limits. And the question before us is that suggested by certain phrases of the Apostle's, viz. the possibility of bringing the "natural" order of matter into accord with the "spiritual" order of matter.

But first we must define our second term, matter. Matter is the universal of body, and body we will define as the organ of consciousness; hence the existence of body anywhere, and in any degree of complexity, implies the existence of consciousness active in proportion as body is organised. Body implies consciousness as inevitably as consciousness implies body. Matter is the abstract and unorganised aspect of body, the raw material which exists for the fashioning of bodies universal or particular, human, sub-human, or super-human. Matter, in other words, is that by and through which consciousness is to function. If we like, we might call body the outcome of the expression of consciousness in a particular manner; equally is it true to define

consciousness as life working through body in a particular manner. Body that is truly alive in all its parts manifests consciousness as the end and aim of its activities ; similarly consciousness that is *fully* active in its various aspects will manifest itself in the Perfect Body which is a complex, not of one state of matter, but of many. To speak of "dead" matter, *i.e.* of matter absolutely void of that which called it into being, and for which it continues to exist, is to speak scientific falseness. All matter, even of the lowest and coarsest degree, displays motion and coherence of parts ; affinities and repulsions ; likes and dislikes ; fallings apart and gatherings ; rebirths and renewals of structure ; each atom, in short, being a miniature world, enacting cosmic business under the impulse of one central Life which is the immanent vital Principle alike in the lowest manifestation as in the highest.

Let us betake ourselves now to the Apostle's antithesis of the "natural" and "spiritual" bodies. The consideration involves that of the twofold mystery of man, which is the subject-matter of the Apostolic writings. Man is a union of two planes and two natures, the Adam, or man of flesh, and the Christ, or man of Spirit. The true message of the Gospel is the possibility of bringing the heavenly, or Christ-consciousness, into the

field of normal, outer experience ; in other words, man is eventually to manifest the hidden Christ as he now manifests the outer Adam. Sense has to give place to Spirit.

But St Paul's literal insistence on this majestic possibility has but too largely escaped the attention of his commentators.

Transformation into the Divine image, and the development of the spiritual body are relegated by the majority of theologians to a vague hereafter ; they form no part of the Christian ideal for the life that now is. At best, say the teachers, we can but make a poor beginning of the life of fulness in God that awaits us beyond the grave, for the flesh is the great enemy of the Spirit, and cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. So the Pauline message is weakened, if not destroyed, by a short-sightedness that waits for heavenliness on the other side of physical death.

But such is not the mind of the Apostle. His ideal is couched in words that are plain enough for the seeing eye ; he indeed burns with their interior fervour. "We all with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord [R.V.] *are changed* into the same image from glory to glory."¹ Again, one of his favourite paradoxes : "And we who live are always delivered unto

¹ 2 Cor. iii. 18.

death that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal bodies";¹ "While our outer man is decaying, our inner man is daily renewed."² Great, explicit, daring words; and yet they form the simple statement of Christian hope and endeavour. Christianity meant first and foremost the reflection of the Master in each of His followers. This was His new and greater incarnation, His "second coming," in which the "body of our humiliation" is to be changed into "the likeness" of His "body of glory."³ Christianity in its primitive inception was, in short, a process rather than a dogma. Later in its history dogma became superadded to process, until ultimately the process became forgotten in the dogma. Dogma is in its place as an interpreter of process; we have endeavoured, indeed, so to present the thought of St Paul as to show the great change, the "New Creature," as the ultimate and the goal of all his doctrinal utterances. The *raison d'être* of the Christ was that He might evolve Christs. This was salvation; for this He set men free from the sin-state, that He might develop in them a life not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Christianity in its practical aspect, in short, is nothing less than transmutation. This is its secret in a word.

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 11.² 2 Cor. iv. 16.³ Phil. iii. 21.

To what do these thoughts conduct us? To this: that "bodily manner" being the law of Divine manifestation for the human race, the new or Divine consciousness which is to supplant that of the natural man demands a new and a spiritual organ. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, for the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* will be mute under the influence of an order of life to which it is not attuned. Therefore the New Man must transform or renew the old body, a transcendental process which involves the slow transmutation of its grosser particles under the ceaseless play of a higher spiritual life. Man in refining himself by thought, deed, and aspiration, performs at the same time a similar work upon the bodies in which he functions. It is true that the chief effort is to be directed towards himself as the centre and controller of the body; but it is also true that a high order of consciousness cannot find expression in a low order of matter. The vehicle must be in unison with its informing spirit.

Our recognition of this important truth would be clearer had the Apostle employed more explicit terminology with regard to the body. Unfortunately, we are left in some doubt as to whether the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* is the chemically built vehicle which forms our immediate link with the outer world, or an interior, "non-atomic enswathement of the

soul, ethereal, intangible, invisible,"¹ which survives the dissolution of the outer body, being the inner man's most direct and appropriate organ. The term $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ and its adjective $\psi\upsilon\chi\iota\kappa\acute{o}s$ are loosely used throughout the New Testament. In one passage $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ refers directly to the spirit of the world, and the "natural man" in this connection is the worldling.² In another place it is used to denote the life of the senses.³ St Matthew's Gospel, on the other hand, has a passage in which $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ is the Immortal part, in contradistinction to the mortal ("Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul ($\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$)").⁴ But in the celebrated chapter (1 Cor. xv.) in which St Paul approaches more nearly to precise statement with regard to the future life of the disciple than in any other writing, the $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ $\psi\upsilon\chi\iota\kappa\acute{o}\nu$ (translated "natural body") should, we think, be more fittingly

¹ "There is a very weighty school of contemporary Protestant theologians—Ulrici is their ablest spokesman—who . . . affirm that we have good grounds for believing in the existence of a non-atomic enswathement of the soul, ethereal, intangible, invisible, which at death departs with it from the muddy vesture of decay, and constitutes the resurrection-body. This is the *linga*, the 'subtle body' of Kapila and the Sankhya school; and I am by no means satisfied that it is not pretty much what Spinoza meant by his 'essentia corporis,' which he affirmed to pertain to the essence of the mind, and to be necessarily eternal."—*Ancient Religion and Modern Thought*, p. 331, by W. S. Lilly.

² 1 Cor. ii. 14 (connect ver. 12, ver. 15).

³ Jas. iii. 15, "earthly, sensual, devilish."

⁴ Matt. x. 28.

rendered "soul-body." "So also is the resurrection of the dead." It is sown a soul-body, it is raised a spirit-body. If there is a soul-body, there is also a spirit-body. And so it is written : "The first man Adam became a living soul ; the last Adam a life-giving spirit."¹

The correct reading of this important expression turns on the question as to what is meant by the metaphorical "sowing," and the soil in which it takes place. An obvious answer is that the seed sown is the natural body, but a more careful examination of the chapter leads to a different conclusion. The Apostle is not speaking of dead bodies, but of dead persons, as he reminds his imaginary critic in somewhat scornful language : "Thou fool . . . that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain . . . and God giveth it a body as it has pleased him. So also is the resurrection of the dead." We have noted elsewhere that St Paul generally uses the terms "death" and "the dead" to denote the soul immersed in material conditions, entombed in the darkness of a flesh nature. The "seed" which is "sown in corruption," therefore, is the soul clothed in its own appropriate enswathement, the psychical body, and the death that is necessary to its quickening is that which it "dies" when in

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 42-45.

contact with the limitations of material life. Thus the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* cannot fittingly be translated "natural body" if by that term is meant the body of flesh, for the latter is really the soil into which the former is sown, and from which is to arise that mystic body of incorruption, glory, and strength which is so strangely born of "corruption, dishonour, and weakness." The Apostle's play of contrasts is nowhere so majestic, or so pregnant with eternal mystery, as in this sonorous passage: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a soul-body, it is raised a spiritual body"; nor are we anywhere so forcibly reminded of that imperative law of being by which the union of opposites has fruit in life eternal.

Our contention is further supported by verses 45 and 46, in which St Paul proceeds to establish a correspondence between the two Adams and the two vestures (*σῶμα ψυχικόν* and *σῶμα πνευματικόν*); and by identifying the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* with the "living soul" he clearly demonstrates that, whatever this vehicle may be, it is not the physical body. The first Adam, he tells us, is first because he is natural (*ψυχικόν*).¹ He is man in his mental and passionate aspect, which from the evolutionary

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 46.

standpoint is first in order of time, though it is last in order of importance. This "Adam" is "out of," that is, based in, an earthly or physical nature,¹ which is the soil wherein the great transubstantiation is to take place which changes him, and incidentally also his psychical vesture, from soul-Adam into spiritual-Adam, from the "image of the earthy" into the "image of the heavenly."

For these reasons, and without dogmatising upon suggestions in the Apostolic writings which are unfortunately fragmentary and obscure, we venture to take the line which seems most promising from an exegetical standpoint, viz. that the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* is not synonymous with the physical body, but is another and more interior organ, the direct though intangible vehicle of the inner man, which is capable of being moulded, refined, and "quickened" by the forces which play upon it from the spiritual realms. And the change which St Paul asserts to be in progress in the Christian disciple is that by which the "soul-body," sown in the corruption of a physical nature, is "raised" into a state of matter directly attuned to the spiritual man, whose activities are naturally conditioned by the kind of matter in which he has to function. It is not impossible that this spiritualising process may ultimately affect even the

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 47.

chemical constituents of the physical body, in view of the numerous instances on record in which the action of forces directly psychical and spiritual have affected changes in the outer organism which physical means have been powerless to accomplish.

That a great transmutation is to accompany the manifestation of the Christ-nature in the New Order, follows as a necessity from the principles already laid down. It would therefore be already at work among the real followers of Pauline teaching. We have hints now and again of the ultimate of the process, when Divine Sonship, with all its marvellous implications, shall have become actually realised on earth, viz. the destruction of death itself, for "we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."¹ And though such a state is clearly spoken of as among the last triumphs of the Spirit, and is therefore not as yet for the majority of the race, there can be no doubt from the Apostolic teachings that the beginnings of this state are possible here and now. For it is given to the Christian disciple to become more than conqueror of all the conditions of his warfare. "All things are yours, whether life or death."²

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 51. Cf. ver. 54: "Death is swallowed up into (absorbed by) victory." Here *thánatos* clearly means physical death. Verses 55-57 seem to indicate that the "victory" is *already* in the hands of the Christian disciple.

² 1 Cor. iii. 22.

Masterhood of matter is no greater achievement than masterhood of self, for matter is in last analysis but the soul's outward account of itself. The kind of activity, therefore, that has given us the *σῶμα ψυχικόν*, or soul-body,¹ may be met and modified by a higher activity whose medium is the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, or spiritual body.

The great Christian mystery is accomplished in the disciple when the life of the Master blends with his life, utilising the old body, but at the same time raising its vibrations to a higher power. That "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death,"² was the Apostle's most fervent ideal, and we are sure that the direct play of the Divine life upon the *σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως* (body of humiliation)³ must have commenced the process of transformation which

¹ Our reading of the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* as soul-body, rather than natural, or physical body, throws light on the before-mentioned obscure passages in the Epistles in which a body is referred to which is obviously *not* the physical.

Rom. vi. 6: "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin (*τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας*) might be done away."

Rom. vii. 24: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (*ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ θανάτου τούτου*).

Rom. viii. 10: "If Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin" (*τὸ μὲν σῶμα νεκρὸν δι' ἁμαρτίαν*).

Rom. vi. 12: "Let not sin reign in your dead body" (*ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι*). Cf. 2 Cor. iv. 11: "For we who live are always delivered unto death that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our dead flesh."

Col. ii. 11: "Putting off of the body of the flesh [R.V.] (*τοῦ σώματος τῆς σαρκὸς*) by the circumcision of Christ" [R.V.].

² Phil. i. 20.

³ Phil. iii. 21.

the teacher so confidently anticipated. What is true of St Paul is equally true of all in whom the New Man has come to the birth. We are therefore justified in saying that even the physical vehicle of the highly spiritual man is different from that of the sensualist, or even of the ordinary person—different in fineness of quality, and in greater sensitiveness to the play of the spiritual forces which centre within and upon him. A higher form of life has expressed itself in a higher type of matter. This is common-sense, it is also on all-fours with experience. We do not find, and we certainly do not expect to find, the outward seeming of a criminal remotely resembling the outward seeming of a saint. The vibratory powers of their “bodies of humiliation” are attuned to different orders of life : in the case of the evil man the power of response to the higher vibrations of the Spirit is low ; in the case of the saint it is high. And the fact that many sensualists have ultimately transformed their outward seeming by a rejection of the Old, and a deliberate cultivation of the New Man, shows that the vibratory power even of their physical atoms is not hard and fast ; it may be extended or raised. It seems not unreasonable to assume, then, that a variety of vibratory rates are possible to one and the same

atom. The secret lies in the *nature* of the force that decides and controls the vibratory limits. Perhaps the old English term "quicken" is more appropriate than its modern equivalent; and the promise that "He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you"¹ may be taken in the literal sense of making quicker the mysterious vortical vibrations which are all that scientists know of the ultimate mystery of the body.

Be this as it may, the transformation of natural into spiritual—or, more strictly, the attuning of the natural to the keynote of the spiritual—is a prevailing Pauline thought. He calls it, in some instances, death. "If Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin."² "Bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body." "So that death worketh in us, but life in you."³ "Our old man was crucified that the body of sin might be done away."⁴ But it may be fairly objected that according to the Gospel no quarter at all is to be shown to flesh and blood which cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor be transformed into another and higher order of

¹ Rom. viii. 11.

³ 2 Cor. iv. 10-12.

² Rom. viii. 10.

⁴ Rom. vi. 6.

being. And this is an important truth, albeit a partial one. Of itself the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* is useless as an organ of the highest life; it must die to its present limit of vibratory response, or, in other words, to its present state of insensibility to the motions of the Divine Indwelling. But this is not death in the literal sense of the dissolution of the natural body. The Apostle seldom uses the term death in a physical sense. He himself speaks of "dying daily"; of "being always delivered unto death"; and yet he continued in the flesh for some time after that saying. It seems plain, then, that the "putting off of the body of the flesh by a circumcision not made with hands,"¹ which he stated *had* taken place in the Christian disciple, meant the destruction of the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* by extension of its vibratory limit. It referred to the soul-body in process of being transcendentalised by the Spirit. And to assume that either this body or the physical is in itself evil, is to go beyond any record we have of the Apostle's teaching. It is true that many of his expressions were afterwards distorted into the Manichean doctrine of the reprobateness of matter—that idea cannot be kept out of any teaching that emphasises the supremacy of Spirit; but a careful attention

¹ Col. ii. 11 (R.V.).

to his main philosophical postulates will tend to preserve the balance on this old crux of the spiritual life. There is no reason to suppose that both the physical and the soul-bodies are incapable of being raised in power of response ; their vibratory limit is not so fixed that they may not yield to the compelling force of a higher order of life. We see going on around us every day a transforming process in which coarseness, sensuality, materiality, the material eye, and the fleshly heart are slowly yielding before the transforming radiance of the Divine Spirit. In short, it should be impossible to watch a transformed spirit without watching also a transformed body. The two miracles proceed *pari passu*.

If it be true, then, that a higher order of life and consciousness demands a higher material expression, we find the Apostle's injunction to put on the New Man completed by his definite assurance that "there is a spiritual body" (not "there shall be").¹ If the one is already in being, the other is already in being, for the New Man may not be separated from His spiritual vehicle.

But this is not all the mystery—very far from it. Certain expressions of the Apostle's point to his regarding the physical and the spiritual bodies

¹ I Cor. xv. 44 (R.V.): "If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body."

as one body under an inner and an outer aspect. Thus, instead of two separate and independent vehicles of which the higher depends for its formation on the death of the lower, we have one, true, eternal (age-long) body, the vesture of the true man, of which the physical body is the copy and the shadow in time-relations. Let us make a literal translation of one of St Paul's most remarkable utterances on the subject (2 Cor. v. 1-5).

"For we know that even if the earthly house of our body were destroyed [R.V.], we have an edifice out of God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the Heavens. And in this we do groan, passionately yearning to have our house out of Heaven put on over ;¹ if so be that, being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we being in this body, do groan being burdened, not that we would be unclothed, but clothed over, that what is mortal may be absorbed by life."

Two expressions here are of vital importance. First, the "earthly (ἐπίγειος) house of our body." That body is a grandiose structure (οἰκοδομὴν ἐκ θεοῦ), an edifice heavenly and eternal, not subject to process in time. But like a temple with its innermost sanctuary, it may have an outer house of approach, with which it is one, even as the

¹ Alford, Bengel, De Wette, Meyer translate this phrase : "To put on, over this dwelling or robe, our house out of heaven."

innermost shrine and its outer approaches make together one temple. So the "earthly house of our body" may refer to that aspect of the one body which is especially adapted to correspond to an earthly environment; even if this part of the tent or tabernacle (σκήνος is allied to σκηνή, tent) were destroyed, the innermost would remain, for it is a structure already in being, of the substance of God, and we earnestly desire to be clothed with it consciously, and now. At the same time, we have no will to be unclothed, or stripped of the outer house, but rather to have the heavenly edifice put on over (ἐπενδύσασθαι), that the outer, though retained, may begin to take a second place.

Thus runs a rough paraphrase of a difficult and obscure, but marvellously suggestive passage, of which the second point of interest is the word ἐπενδύσασθαι. Its great importance lies in the implication afforded by the metaphor. Ἐπενδύνω means "to put on over," and, when taken in conjunction with the expression "not that we would be unclothed," goes to show that a state is here referred to which is not the ordinary death of the physical body. *For when a garment is put on over another, that other is obviously retained.* The change that has taken place is chiefly a transvaluation of values, a mighty introversion of the conditions

and standards of the Old or natural Man. What was formerly first in order of manifestation, first in consciousness and in prominence, now yields to the spiritual organ of the Self, hitherto unrevealed, but all the time the real substance of the material body, the real instrument of the spiritual man. Its function is to manifest a new and radiant consciousness in a new and radiant manner. It will daily grow as the heaven-consciousness comes more and more into the forefront of life ; for although it ever *is*, it has not yet become for us the normal instrument of daily life. It is the great transmuter of the "earthly house," which in the Christian convert is not to disappear, but to be attuned to the mighty play of spiritual vibrations proceeding from the "tabernacle in the heavens" ; that both together, the heavenly house and the earthly, may make up one abode for the Divine Indwelling, and heaven and earth may kiss one another in a great reconciliation of opposites.

In the Apocalypse we are referred to the mystery under another metaphor : it is the "city that hath foundations whose builder and master is God." The city is the spiritual body, and the foundations are the "earthly house," the *ἐπίγειος οὐκία*.

Obviously, to postpone this glorious manifestation to some distant age and sphere is to rob the

Gospel of its *raison d'être*, which is the taking of the normal into the supernormal life, while retaining the former as the base of supernormal activity. In the Perfect Man the opposites are *reconciled* by the retention of each in proper balance and proportion. Hence the Christian who would be "perfect" is to mirror the "glory of the Lord" in the life that now is; he does not wait for death to rob him of the outer body ere he may commence the building of the spiritual body. That mystery is not of the time-plane; it is as surely "here and now" as "there and then"; its *manifestation* depends on the aspect of ourselves which we desire shall become uppermost in life. For the kind of body we habitually fashion is conditioned by the kind of consciousness which for ages we have made to represent ourselves. The unreserved identification of the true centre of selfhood with the heavenly rather than with the earthly man is Conversion—literally a turning round. It is more, even, than this: it implies reversion of every standpoint, every judgment, every motive, every principle, every outlook that formerly represented the self in identification with the natural man—standpoints right with regard to their own plane, but wrong when applied, as we so often attempt to apply them, to the things of the Higher Self. To put the

heavenly vesture "on over" means the complete reversal of the normal mental attitude. We have no longer to think of ourselves as mortals uncertainly groping after a remote immortality, but as immortals condescending for a while, purposively and voluntarily, to conditions of the finite order. That the race shall ultimately master the finite through the power of the infinite seems to be the only justification for there being a finite order at all ; it exists but that it may be overcome, and absorbed into the incorruptible and immortal—or we have entirely misread the Apostle's message to humanity. "Thanks be to God," he exclaims, "which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,"¹ for in the person of Jesus, the First-Fruits of the new Order, we have had our guarantee that conditions which now appear insuperable to the human spirit shall be one day put under its feet. Hence it is not too much to affirm, on the authority of Him who "overcame the world," that the redemption of matter is part of the redemption of man. The New Man implies the New Earth ; both, indeed, are guaranteed facts of the future, and shall arise as fruition of the toil and culture of the present. They represent a condition of rightness in which right relation between spiritual and material, right knowledge

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 57.

of the essential nature of man and the universe, right action based on that knowledge, will completely supersede the "former things" of ignorance, disharmony, and sin. True, the *realisation* of this state is in the lap of the future; but since the future is only the present *in extenso*, the conquest of the mortal by the immortal may begin from the moment the immortal realises himself as such, and prepares in all respects to live the mortal life from the immortal standpoint.

But to return to the spiritual body. St Paul declares it to be eternal, unmade, and of the heavenly state, which places it at once in the category of existing facts. This *αἰώνιον* or age-body, which is the direct and appropriate organ of the Spiritual Man, has an age-long span, in contradistinction to the earthly organ, whose limit is that of years. Hence the body "out of God" is the original of the outer tabernacle; it precedes its birth, and survives its dissolution. It is co-terminous with the Spiritual Man, and was his vesture in "Eden" ere the Elohim symbolically fashioned the "coats of skin" that marked his "fall" into denser regions of the universe. The things that are "of God," "in the Heavens," are ever in being in the womb of the Eternal Mind, therefore we may take our stand with the Apostle on the fact that our true Body—similarly with our true Ego—is already

in the heavenly state, waiting to be appropriated by the personality that has "come to himself."

This truth, however, has its complementary side. The spiritual body is out of time and space *as they are known to us*; it is a "now" and a certainty. But the *appropriation* of an existing fact involves process. We may have, therefore, to look to futurity for the realisation of the now. This is but another way of stating the old problem of the reconciliation of opposites. Being and Becoming have to be brought into mutual harmony, for there is not a single fact or principle in experience which does not involve this antithesis, nor demand its reconciliation. For this reason we have set forth the mystery of the spirituality of matter in a twofold mode; as a process of "quickenings," or transmuting on the one hand, and of appropriation of an already existing fact on the other, following the method of St Paul, who treats the subject both from the "above" and the "below," from the standpoint of being and the standpoint of becoming.¹

¹ When he speaks of the great change as a transformation of "the body of our humiliation into the likeness of the body of His glory," he is treating the mystery from the plane of process and becoming; when he yearns "not to be unclothed, but clothed over" with a Vesture already existing in the heavenly state, the standpoint of process has given place to the standpoint of the affirmation of true being in God. Each standpoint is true, because each is mutually complementary.

Both the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* and the *σῶμα πνευματικόν* are needed elements in the human economy, since each organ is related to a specific level of nature. But while the one appertains to the plane of becoming, the other is beyond and above it. The "body of His glory," which is also the body of *our* glory, for we live in Him, may not be brought within the laws of the finite. But its "image and likeness" is to be reflected in us here and now ; hence the work of the Christian disciple is so to purify the natural man and his organs of consciousness that there may be an unbroken surface for the reflection of the Heavenly Image.

CHAPTER VII

SIN : ITS ROOT AND ITS "NEEDS-BE." (ABSTRACT.)

WE have studied the highest generalisation in the Pauline philosophy, man universal, in his twofold aspect of material and spiritual. What we have now to consider is the second of the Apostle's great antitheses of the inner life, that of Sin in contrast with Grace, and its consequence Death in contrast with Life. These are perhaps the most important members of the whole series of opposites in the Epistles, being the root-pair from which the remainder are unfolded in a logical and ordered sequence, as we may see if we categorise them thus :

Sin—Grace.	Elemental states of being of the Old Man and the New ; the two poles of human nature.
Death—Life.	The above from the standpoint of the Particular ; Sin and Grace in manifestation.

Law—Gospel.	Media for making known the universal facts of Sin and Grace. "Through law cometh the knowledge of sin." ¹ "That sin might be shown to be sin by the working of death to me through that which is good." (Law). ² "For therein is revealed (by the Gospel) the Rightness of God." ³
Faith—Works.	The conditions of manifestation in the individual soul of the great universals revealed through Law and Gospel. "By grace ye are saved through faith." ⁴

Thus, in orderly series of antitheses, the two elemental facts of Sin and Grace are unfolded from the widest abstractions to the most concrete applications.

Our task will now be to discover, if possible, the inwardness of the elemental fact of sin, in its philosophical rather than its strictly theological aspect. We shall note that the teaching of St Paul on this subject falls under the same broad, twofold distinction of universal and particular which we have observed to apply to his doctrine as a whole. Philosophically, it is of the first importance to distinguish between the abstract state of sin in which all men are included by reason of their birth into the specific limitations of a flesh-nature,

¹ Rom. iii. 20.

² Rom. vii. 13.

³ Rom. i. 17.

⁴ Eph. ii. 8.

and the concrete acts of disharmony, or transgression against a revealed moral law to which the abstract state gives rise—a distinction which is certainly maintained by the Apostle, in spite of occasional looseness of language in which the word sin (*ἁμαρτία*) is sometimes made to do service both for state and act, negative cause and positive effect. In the present chapter we propose to deal less with sin as evil act than with sin as abstract state, our object being to show that while abstract *ἁμαρτία* does not in itself imply a sense of reprobateness and pollution, it is nevertheless the essential cause of all that is covered by these latter terms. We have, then, to offer a scriptural suggestion of the source and meaning of abstract *ἁμαρτία*, and its relation to concrete acts and tendencies (*ἁμαρτήματα*).

The word used by the Apostle mainly for sin in the abstract sense—*ἁμαρτία*, the “missing of the mark,”—is a term of negative connotation, as indeed are all the words employed in the Epistles to indicate sin, either as state or act. *Ἄμαρτία* describes a condition rather than an act, or series of acts, and we admire the metaphysical subtlety of a language which shadows cause in the very word it employs to represent effect. A state of sin is a state of miss, failure, non-attainment. The whole sum of positive evils are derived from

what a man is not, from his lack of true being in God, his emptiness of all that should make him truly man. I am aware that the mere mention of sin from this point of view raises the difficult question of how a state of non-being can be logically affirmed to exist at all. How can positive consequences arise from negative causes? We cannot answer save to affirm that the positive results known as sinful acts are in many instances less serious, less stubborn, less indicative of the true condition of a man than the chill state of half-life from which his soul has gone forth into outer action. Not to have attained is, if we probe deeply enough, the ultimate cause of all so-called wrong-doing. And under this wide generalisation must be included the non-attainment of the man who has tried and failed, as well as of him who has not yet arisen to effort. Both are in a state of abstract ἀμαρτία, *though in very different degrees of that state*. Hence the Apostolic assertion, "there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."¹ Indeed, the judgment of sin from the view-point of inner state rather than that of outer act enormously extends the ban of ἀμαρτία, showing it to be a universal condition, inevitable to humanity at its present level, and not to be escaped by the rigid

¹ Rom. iii. 23.

keeping of the moral law. It is not, *from this point of view*, a state of reprobateness, but simply a failure to attain.

Obviously, these remarks apply to sin from its most universal and abstract standpoint, sin under the connotation of limitation, which is but a synonym for human nature at the pole of the Old Man. The popular theological conceptions of sin are mainly those of concrete evil acts, and of tendencies thereto which may or may not result in expression. Sin from this standpoint is hereditarily acquired aversion from the things of the Spirit, choice between known good and preferred evil being the element that distinguishes the true sinner from him who falls into acts of ignorant ill-doing. That motive and will have to be admitted as essential elements in the moral problem goes without saying, but they cannot be said to apply to sin from our present standpoint, viz. the elemental condition of vanity to which the creature is subjected "not of his own will."¹ The sin under which all are included is the state of abstract *ἀμαρτία* inevitable to the race under the limitations of a flesh-nature, and it may therefore be condemned only in the sense of being repudiated as an expression of the true being of man. "There is no difference" does

¹ Rom. viii. 20.

not apply to the concrete plane of *ἁμαρτήματα*, or acts of sin, but to that general limitation of spiritual sense, that lack of *rapprochement* with Divine verities which afflicts even the saint who is far on the road to the kingdom. To "come short of the glory of God" is to be still under sin, though the face be set resolutely upward. Sin, in short, according to the sense of St Paul in such passages as Romans vi. 10-11, vi. 2, viii. 2, iii. 23, is the limitation laid upon the individual spirit, which makes him for the time being a little lower than Divine. In *this* sense there is no opprobrium in the term; a sinner may be well on the road to the mark, but the fact that he has not yet attained it keeps him a sinner still.

From *ἁμαρτία* in this most abstract and far-reaching sense the Gospel saves, by indicating to man his hope of overcoming—nay, by declaring that in the Christ he has overcome already. The play of the spiritual energies of the typical New Man on a world in the toils of a dark crisis has forwarded and rendered measurably possible the dawn of a New Earth and a New Humanity. Henceforth the standpoint of life is to be that of the triumphant Christ, who has overcome the tyranny of the animal-human nature for every one who wills to share in that victory. The disciple is to take his stand boldly on the

truth that an actual attainment by one implies a potential attainment by all ; hence he is to reckon himself as truly dead to the sin-state in which he was born as though he had actually ceased from acts of specific *ἀμαρτήματα*.¹ Affirmation is the preliminary to realisation.

There is no boasting in this attitude, for *in view of his own individual evolution* he has not yet attained ; he “presses on towards the prize of the high calling.”² But as a participant in the wave of spiritual life now rising towards its flood, possibilities are his which did not belong to an earlier day. The manifestation of the Christ in Jesus has brought the state of the New Man within measurable reach of all who are prepared to obey the necessary conditions. Humanity is lifted by the advent of Christ, because Christhood transcends separateness. It is an all-embracing state. In its unimaginable comprehensiveness all things and beings are included ; by its illimitable power all things and beings are raised in potential development. More especially is this great fact true for those who deliberately tread the path towards individual Christhood. The disciple participates in the fulness of his Head without being relieved of the need for personal effort ; rather, the demand for his individual co-operation is increased by

¹ Rom. vi. 11.

² Phil. iii. 14.

the greater impetus that has been given to the dawning powers within. It is quite possible for him who has renounced ἁμαρτία as state yet to fall into ἁμαρτία as act. Necessarily, the more intense the realisation of the abstract truth which is equally true whether it is realised or not, but which is *effective in character* only as it is realised, the fewer become the acts of specific ἁμαρτήματα. Nevertheless they will continue to occur so long as the individual's attainment is not yet at the Christ-level. Hence the Apostle, while impressing on his converts their freedom from the sin-state, finds a constant necessity to warn them against particular acts of sin, and to urge a continual affirmation of their standing in the spiritual life. "Stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved."¹ "Let whosoever nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."² "Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement."³ "We pray to God that ye do no evil."⁴

Our thought in the present chapter is thus mainly of ἁμαρτία as state. St Paul, we have seen, draws the circumference of sin with a radius that is almost infinite. Grace, according to his philosophy, is the manifestation of the Christ-nature immanent in all men ; conversely, sin is the state in which that nature is hindered, stultified, or

¹ Phil. iv. 1. ² 2 Tim. ii. 19. ³ 2 Cor. vii. 1. ⁴ 2 Cor. xiii. 7.

imperfectly developed. It is strictly and literally a "missing of the mark," for, that mark once reached, sin in the conventional sense would be no longer possible.

But a greater problem has now to be faced. The nature of the sin-state is failure to attain, but only a superficial attention to the subject will be content to leave it at that. We have to go further, and ask concerning the cause of the failure. Whence and what is that element in man which appears to make persistently for the frustration of the ultimate ends of being? The question which besets all thinkers is not the possibility of avoiding or yielding to definite, concrete tendencies of the sinful nature, but of the *origin of that nature itself*. And the task now before us is to ascertain, not our own but the Apostle's answer to this crux of religious philosophy. We have seen him trace the origin of man to Eden; in Eden, therefore, we must seek for the origin of sin. But the Eden of St Paul is not the Eden of the plenary inspirationalist. Eden, we have already observed, was to one trained in Kabalah a great spiritual allegory, dealing with the dim beginnings of man in states long previous to any of which we have historical record. From the prominence St Paul gives to the story, it is conceivable that he was instructed in the mystery of which it was the

imperfect expression. Therefore, without intruding our own personal estimate of the value of this hoary tradition, we must seek, as far as possible, to read it with the eyes of the great Master in Israel. It must again be emphasised that Eden is not a place in the physical universe,¹ neither is its matter—the “dust” from which the Kabalistic androgyne “Adam” was created—any form of the matter with which we are at present familiar. It is the causal plane in which was “every herb of the field before it grew,”—the archetype, that is, of our world in an earlier, pre-atomic phase of being. Both the scene of the Eden drama and its *dramatis personæ* are too remote from our present experience to be of fundamental importance to any theology that claims to be based upon knowledge. But a tradition that is universal has a very serious claim to respect and consideration, and we can find traces of the Eden story in every religion worthy of the name. In addition to the Babylonian and Assyrian cuneiform, variations of the same legend

¹ Says Archdeacon Wilberforce : “The Eden of the Old Testament is obviously not on this planet ; it can never be localised ; every element in it is non-natural. The conscious presence of Deity, the bi-sexual nature of man, the abnormal conditions of atmosphere, all point to a condition of life not realised here, and from thence, from the other dimension, into human bodies and life’s education, came man, and that was his ‘Paradise Lost’ ; back thither . . . shall man go, and that will be his ‘Paradise Regained.’”

appear in the Egyptian Books of Thoth, the record by Pindar of the Samothracian mysteries, in which the Kabiri, whose generic name was Adamas, were the seven ancestors or progenitors of mankind, the Hindu Puranas, and many more. Greatly as the story differs in the various records, the one feature of importance common to them all is that the name Adam is not an individual, but a collective term. Says George Smith in his *Chaldean Account of Genesis*, p. 86: "The word Adam used in these legends for the first human being is evidently not a proper name, but is only used as a term for mankind. Adam appears as a proper name in Genesis, but certainly in some passages is only used in the same sense as the Assyrian word."

In Gen. ii. we read of the man or race, on its first creation, as being "alone," which on the above interpretation would mean androgyne. The appearance of distinct sex is allegorised by the taking of Eve from the side of Adam,¹ and represents a change in the spiritual and physiological conditions of the race, which may have demanded millennia, as we count time, for its accomplishment. This change appears to have been long prior to the birth of the race into physical conditions, for the

¹ Vide *Sermons Preached in Westminster Abbey*, by Archdeacon Wilberforce, pp. 103-105.

“coats of skin”—an admirable symbol of the atomic body—were provided only after the mystic “Fall” and the loss of the Garden in Eden had deprived the pair of a body of more ethereal elements. Two falls are thus comprised in this allegory : the first, the fall into separate sexes ; and the second, the inevitable fall into denser, physical matter, through a false understanding of the true sex relation.

The obvious feature of the Eden story is the wilful misuse of the separate, creative powers which the man and woman—now fully self-realised, creative entities—found awaiting their command. The drama hints that the race as separated beings, no longer bi-sexual, sought to gratify an inevitable desire for reunion by false methods ; they materialised into a bodily function what in the Divine purpose should ever have remained spiritual. But the *real* Fall was prior to the specific act recorded in the allegory ; whatever the sin may have been that “brought death into the world, and all our woe”—and most commentators agree that a prostituted sex-indulgence is the idea poetically figured by the eating of the forbidden fruit,—the root of that sin must be sought in the state which rendered such indulgence possible. In other words, the true Fall, or the birth of abstract ἀμαρτία, was *marked* by the

passing of the race out of the androgyne state into distinct male and female. We hear no mention of disobedience prior to the coming forth of Eve. The injunction not to eat was received by the androgyne Adam in perfect harmony and acquiescence, for in that state he had not apparently lost his pristine concurrence with the Divine will. But as a separated entity he succumbs without a demur. We are therefore justified in assuming from the suggestions of this allegory that the race before, and the race after separation, were on two different planes of being. At the so-called "Fall" humanity passed out of its essential unity into conditions that made for separation, otherness, and the consolidation of a personal centre, for the sake of experience in self-knowledge which could probably have been gained in no other way. The price of that experience was the birth of the sin-state, with all its inevitable consequences. In the allegory we are shown the rise and progress of *ἀμαρτία*, from the first launch of the soul into the new state of separation, the coming of Eve from Adam, to the appearance of the serpent of glamour, and the commencement of a process of spiritual inversion, in which woman, the intuitive principle in humanity, is herself the first to be misled and to mislead. The climax of the drama marks, however, a great step in

evolution when it shows the man and woman as non-moral automata no longer, but self-realised individuals exercising the power to disobey. Before separation, their heavenly harmony had been that of the embryo passively responding to unhindered processes of growth ; hence the first Fall involved no moral choice, and was the subject of Divine approval ; "it is not good for man to be alone."¹ In the second Fall, however, we are presented with man, the rebel, realising his adolescence by embarking on the opposite current to that in which all true life is set. He has to learn obedience by the things which he suffers through disobedience. For a perfect obedience is not the achievement of babes, but of men grown to a slow maturity in the painful school of repented rebellion.

But the main point of the consideration lies in the state *of which sex-separation was a last outward expression*. That separation was *not in itself sin* ; its true significance consisted in its *association with the change* which was the root of all sin, whether abstract or concrete. If it be true that changes of great organic importance are invariably the final expression of changes in the human spirit itself, there must have been a deep and vital reason both for the bi-sexual state and for its passing away.

¹ Gen. ii. 18.

Without attempting to dogmatise on an event so mystical and remote, we may state what seems to be the suggestion of the allegory, that the race prior to the coming of Eve was androgyne *by reason of its harmony with the Central Unity*. Afterwards an interior, vital separation from that Unity *expressed itself* in the form of sex-separation on the external plane, and, speaking theologically, we say man fell. His real fall was *prior* to the act or acts which followed as a logical consequence of certain altered relations of his spirit to its heavenly environment, God. The great teaching to be emphasised is the fact that a *changed spiritual attitude* occurred at a definite point in the early life of the race, and led to a separation on the outward plane of the complementary elements of humanity which had been previously united in God. The Eden story itself would be too slight a basis for this thought were it not confirmed by hints scattered through many sacred writings that sex-separation will not exist in a state of perfected spiritual unity. In addition to the familiar words of Christ, that in Heaven there shall "neither be marrying, nor giving in marriage,"¹ we may also quote from the extra-canonical fragments published by Restch in 1889 : "In answer to the question of Salome as to how long death should hold sway . . .

¹ Mark xii. 25.

the Lord said: 'When ye shall tread upon the vesture of shame, and when the two shall be one, and the male with the female, neither male nor female.'"¹ (To tread on the vesture of shame is obviously to transcend the animal nature.) In other words, a return to the pristine Eden of God-consciousness in which the human nature is whole, one, and undivided, involves a cessation of the division of that nature on the outward plane of sex. Conversely, then, we may venture to conclude that the present division of the race into sexes had its rise in a primitive loss of the sense of spiritual unity with which it was originally endowed. Man has gradually slipped away from the unimaginable splendour of "that Imperial Palace whence he came." With the deepening of successive veils of matter has come the strengthening of his belief in the illusion of a personal centre and will apart from the One Centre and the One Will. Here, then, we have the secret of what the Apostle describes as the "law of sin and death," which we have discovered, by our allegorical reading of the Eden story, to lie in the first separation of man from his spiritual Centre, God. The statement that by one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death through sin,² is

¹ *Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*, G. R. S. Mead, p. 599.

² Rom. v. 12.

but half the truth ; it has been necessary further to inquire how sin entered into the one man to render the disobedience possible. For it must not be forgotten by those who place the origin of moral evil in the exercise, by the first man, of the power to disobey, *that disobedience implies a pre-existing state of sin*—a will no longer in pristine harmony with the Source of all will. The power to disobey is the prerogative of every moral being ; the *will* to disobey exists only in one who has lost the sense of “rightness” with which he was originally endowed. Hence the man and woman *had fallen before they ate* ; their act was the hidden tendency to rebellion crystallised into definite expression. Their true fall lay in the turning of the will from God towards the self, in the effort to strengthen a personal centre.

Once the roots of *ἀμαρτία* have been recognised, the details of concrete *ἀμαρτήματα* fade into comparative insignificance. A sinner on the grosser levels of the sin-plane is a lesser victim of *ἀμαρτία* than one, no longer bestial, who has yet built his personal centre into a fortress of opposition to the heavenly demands of surrender, humility, and renunciation. Sin is not formidable from what it does, but from what it is. And for this reason we have so few recorded instances of Christ’s rebuking *ἀμαρτήματα*, or concrete sins in man.

He came to proclaim ἄφεσις ἀμαρτημάτων, the forgiveness of sins. "Incidentally there is ἄφεσις ἀμαρτημάτων," says an able writer, "but it is quite remarkable how little of His attention is given to acts of mere wrong-doing. Thus ἀμαρτία cannot be regarded as the mere abstract quality of all ἀμαρτήματα, but as a definite, indwelling something that He found in all men, the ἄφεσις of which was no mere judicial pardon, but the elimination of an opposing force from within, thus making the individual fitter for the kingdom of heaven."¹

St Paul, on the other hand, is entirely Jewish in his regard for the concrete; he invariably translates his abstract ideas into terms of the mundane mind. Whereas in Jesus the Jewish mind is no stronger than is necessary for purposes of accommodation, in Paul it was dominant to the very end. Many and terrible are the categories of his ἀμαρτήματα; fierce his denunciations of "those who do such things." Yet at the same time we may catch a golden suggestion that behind the roar of his anathemas lay a deep understanding of the mystery of ἀμαρτία. "The creature was made subject to vanity, not of his own will, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope,"² he exclaims in one of

¹ *Essays in Logos and Gnosis*, by T. S. Lea, B.D., p. 94.

² Rom. viii. 20.

his most inspired outbursts. Vanity, then, the illusion of the separate, self-turned personality, is part of the predestination of man to the measure and stature of God. In coming under the illusion that he is free to serve an isolated self, he learns what he can learn in no other way, that such isolation is but the vanity of vanities. By tasting, and then abandoning a false selfhood, he comes eventually to the possession of a self indeed. "For it should ever be borne in mind that there can be no other centre to Being than Self. God does not say to man, 'Be not yourself, be I'; what He says is, 'Be no longer your false self, but be your true Self, which is I.'"¹

This is a modern paraphrase of the Apostolic teaching of the illusory nature of the separated self, which runs like a golden thread throughout the Epistles. The self of sin belongs to the past dispensation of the Old Man; *he is dead*, and not even his apparent activity in the regenerated soul may disturb the realisation of this, the supreme message of Christian ethics. "Now it is no more I that do it (sin), but sin which dwelleth in me."² "I myself with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

¹ *The Mission of Evil*, by G. W. Allen, p. 64.

² Rom. vii. 20-25.

CHAPTER VIII

SIN (*continued*) (Ὁργή—Δόξα)

It is impossible to consider the Apostolic doctrine of sin without special reference to certain passages in the Epistle to the Romans (ix. 14-24), which present on the surface difficulties of a formidable character. In these verses we are brought face to face with the hard but unmistakable doctrine of the "needs-be of offences,"¹ which, briefly stated, means that in the mighty Drama of the Universe, evil and the evil man have a bitter but inevitable part. Our previous words on the root and source of abstract ἁμαρτία will be incomplete, therefore, without some consideration of the place and purpose in the Divine economy of the sinner, him in whom ἁμαρτία finds definite, concrete expression.

Now the key-words of the teaching to be considered lie in an important pair of opposites, ὀργή and δόξα, which occur more than once in the passage just named. These terms, which are not

¹ Lit. Σκάνδαλα, occasions of stumbling.

adequately translated by the somewhat bald English renderings, "wrath" and "glory," are among the most prominent of the Apostolic series of antitheses we have set ourselves to examine. *Δόξα* is a far-reaching word, in which St Paul indicates dogmatically the Mark the missing of which is *ἁμαρτία*, or sin. In his characteristic fashion, he explains one side of a contrast by the presentation of its opposite. "There is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory (*δόξα*) of God."¹ In other words, sin is the state which falls short of *δόξα*, which term—somewhat ambiguously translated "glory"—has a fuller meaning than can be put into one English word. It signifies literally the "showing forth" of God, its root being *δοκέω*, "I appear." To use the word in its secondary sense of "vision," or "a thing seen or revealed," will frequently convey intelligibility where "glory" would be void of suggestion. We may venture to say, then, that a state of *δόξα* is one in which the Divine Image is fully shown forth; consequently that its opposite, sin, is the privation of the Divine; hence a state of non-being, or, as the Apostle terms it, death.

Now it is obvious that if the falling short of *δόξα* is sin, the attaining of *δόξα* is perfection, the destined end of each man created in the Divine

¹ Rom. iii. 23.

Image. Of course the experience of St Paul, or of any other being in the flesh, could but touch the fringe of this attainment ; whatever the true significance of *δόξα* may be—and words afford us but the barest glimpse of its fulness—the stages of *δόξα* will be as infinite as God Himself :

“Veil after veil may lift, but there will be
Veil after veil behind.”

That the unclouded showing forth of God is truly the end and highest possibility of man has been guaranteed to the Christian disciple by the Master-life in which such possibility was proclaimed and revealed. A primary part of the Apostle's message consisted in giving the “light of the knowledge of the *δόξα* of God in the face of Jesus Christ ;”¹ which knowledge has for its complement the inspiring truth that “as He is, so are we in this world.” The Master represented to His followers the state of the Mark attained, having put away sin by revealing the supreme condition of translucency to God of which sin is the coming short. To attain the “glory of God,” then, is to cure sin at its root by becoming what to the Apostle is our highest end—a vessel for the “riches of *δόξα*.”²

But the message before us (Rom. ix. 20–23) hints that a metaphysical notion is incomplete with-

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 6.

² Rom. ix. 23.

out its opposite. To the conception of *δόξα* as the Divine in visibility, the race in the noontide splendour of the New Man, we are opposed by a deep and elemental contrast. “*Ὁργή*,” “wrath,” is the principle in Nature that opposes, in contradistinction to the principle that makes for the ideal end of being. Both principles are necessary to the process by which a universe is created. The making known of “*δόξα*” through “vessels of mercy” is not the whole purpose of God. Or shall we say, rather, that included within, and forming an intrinsic part of that purpose is the dark mystery of the existence of “vessels of wrath, fitted into destruction.”¹ “*Ὁργή*,” of which “wrath” is an unfortunately chosen synonym, is a figurative term for an attribute of the Divine nature which automatically opposes conditions that no longer make for progress, health, and unity. It is also the disintegrating factor both of the inner and the outer worlds; God, Creator and Preserver, manifesting in His third aspect of Destroyer that He may re-create on ever higher levels of glory. Therefore “riches and mercy” demand the opposites of “wrath and power” for the maintenance of a manifested universe, whether the Macrocosm or the Microcosm. There are elements in the Divine purpose which need expression through vessels of another character

¹ Κατηρτισμένα εἰς ἀπώλειαν, Rom. ix. 22.

than those of "mercy unto honour." A hard saying, truly, until we realise that the qualities attributed to God under the figure of human emotions are really cosmic principles, directing to a mighty end. The Apostle uses metaphor to express a truth which ranks him on the side of pure, philosophical monism. Let us put what we conceive to be his meaning into modern terms.

¹ The world, he would seem to say, is presented to us in a series of opposites which appear, from the partial standpoint, to be in irreconcilable antagonism until the insight of synthesis discovers them to be but divided complements. *Au fond*, there is but one responsible Source of all contrasts, from Whom is alike the evil and the good, as one potter fashions from the same lump vessels either of honour or dishonour. Is this a difficult conception? What if God should have a purpose in evil? He who is the support of the universe on its constructive side, Whose Will is the ceaseless evolution of "Good into better, best,"—does He not also utilise opposite means by the providential fashioning of "instruments fitted into the work of destruction," which is the necessary pioneer of reconstruction?

The Apostle is but stating in other words his Master's great saying of the "needs-be of

¹ Rom. ix. 14-24.

offences.”¹ The evil man has his place in the universe; *he would not be if*, in the deepest counsels of the Most High, *he should not be*. By exercise of the forces which make for disruption and death, he indirectly promotes growth and prevents stagnation by breaking up when the time for breaking comes, and by opposing when the laws of growth demand the conflict of resisting elements. He is the manifestation of the ὀργή, or “wrath” aspect of the All-Good, which gives rise in man to moral evil only when it is allowed to exist unopposed by its twin opposite, the “riches of δόξα.”

The main difficulty in this passage is the Apostle's implication that God, the Ideal Good, is at the same time the Author of Evil. But let us for the moment disabuse the term “good” of its sense of personal morality, and regard it from the wide cosmic standpoint from which it may be applied to God. Let us state good to be the life of God visible in *all* departments, and behind *every* phenomenon of the universe, in ceaseless movement towards an ideal end. This end, as far as our limited intuitions can determine, will be the perfect adjustment of the part to the whole, and the realisation by the part of the perfection to be manifested in the whole. Final good will be final

¹ Matt. xviii. 7.

harmony. In other words, good is the process by which we get a universe, using that term to include all planes and all departments of being. But the order of this process, as far as we are able to perceive it both in the inner and the outer universe, is twofold. There is first Chaos, finally Cosmos. Chaos is good in inception ; Cosmos is good in completion. Chaos and Cosmos are the expression of forces whose tendencies and direction are opposite, but which are essentially of one Source, and that Source the Supreme. No matter how contrary the work of His hands, there is but one Potter and one Lump. Moreover, the cyclic process of the One Life is intentionally tortuous, and divinely slow. The universe has not come about, was never meant to come about, by a direct, creative fiat, otherwise the seeming indifference of the Creator to the imperfection of His creatures would leave us no option but to curse God, and die. But we are patient with God, because the world is not yet created, and it is futile to watch the march of an eternal process through the eyelet-hole of a moment of time.

A universe whose end is the ultimate perfection of the creature must be good in every detail, if by "good" we connote that which conduces in the end to progress. But the same vibration can give rise to more than one effect, according to the matter in

which it plays, and the senses which receive it. Enlarge, develop those senses, purify the matter in which they work, and the original vibration takes on a new character, receives a higher and subtler interpretation. The whole category of the carnal sins may be, at a very low stage, the distorted expression of an elemental impulse towards possession, growth, "good," which, because it is at first beyond the control of animal man, as its purpose is beyond his comprehension, will express itself in terms of passion and sensuality. We may bewail the darkness of vision that sets the goal of happiness so low, but we must be chary how we condemn the primitive impulse to seek "good" under the only form in which "good" can as yet be recognised.

Good we will further define as the Divine life passing out of idea into realisation. Strictly, as taught the Buddha, the Unmanifest is alone the Good ; but the Unmanifest takes expression in the manifest that It may satisfy Its eternal thirst for self - utterance. It thus submits Itself to the essential laws of the manifest, those, namely, of contrast between alternatives. We are speaking, of course, from the only possible standpoint, that of experience of things at our present level of growth. We see the laws of contrast and opposition implicit in every aspect of the world ; they are necessary even to our simplest mental pro-

cesses. All our perceptions are series of nice discriminations between resemblances and differences. A square thing would have no meaning for us had we no experience of roundness ; a light thing would fail of impression had we no sense of its contrast, shadow. Duality of aspect of the One Good is necessary to the very existence of the universe ; the Potter who sets out to make a world must fashion alike from the same lump vessels both of ὀργή and of δόξα.

We are prepared now to take a step further in our definition of God as Good. Good is the life of God realising itself in the universe by means of resistance with its opposite line of tendency. The “wrath” of God, therefore, will be Good in its aspect of resisting agency. Growth can come only by struggle, and in order to struggle we must have something to resist. As the air is to the wings of a bird, and as the soil to the sprouting of the seed, so is the materialising, isolating tendency in the soul of man to that part of him which is born from above. The centrifugal and centripetal forces of his moral life exercise upon him an inevitable pull, until the time comes when their perfect equipoise shall make of him a perfect, hence a non-resisting, man. Now the forces operate unequally, because our present tendencies are still on the side of the earthward attraction.

We respond to it with the more readiness from its being on that side of life that our education is now mainly carried on. But although undue and disproportionate response to the earthward pull is the root of most of the moral evil we see around us, it is both absurd and unphilosophical to stigmatise that force as *in itself* evil. It is no more evil *per se* than the upward tendency is good *per se*. Both together, in perfect equipose, constitute the perfect good. Each plays an equally necessary part in the development of character. The centripetal force of the nature, derived from the Divine in its aspect of *δόξα*, helps to neutralise the otherwise overpowering vibrations of the physical plane; the centrifugal, or *ὀργή* aspect, lends it the sturdy self-assertiveness which is absolutely indispensable to development and to conquest.

From this point of view several important questions arise which may be considered very briefly. And paramount is the difficulty as to how inevitable "offences" may justly work woe unto the man through whom the offence cometh. If the forces of opposition are necessary to the maintenance of a moral universe, "why doth He still find fault?"¹

The Apostle's answer to this, his own question, removes the surface difficulty. Clearly, he would say, the One Responsible Source of the universe has

¹ Rom. ix. 19.

a right to develop His own purpose through instruments the best adapted to the end in view, whether that end be one of construction or destruction. But the vessel of destruction, although from God, and under His overrule, is shaped for that end only after much endurance and long-suffering. This would seem to mean that *its use is decided by prior fitness*. Only those are selected as the agents of darkness who by their actions and tendencies have made themselves eligible for the dire task of becoming "instruments fitted into destruction," *i.e.* shaped to do work on the lines of disintegration. Even such are still within a universe of purpose which turns to account their stiffened self-will, though at dire cost to themselves, by making them part of the general resisting agencies which help to keep the world in equilibrium. Again, a consideration of the distinction between abstract and concrete ἀμαρτία will help us. Abstract ἀμαρτία we have seen to be the tendency to separateness and disintegration which is the natural expression of our nature at the animal-human level. This tendency, we must be again reminded, is *not in itself evil*; indeed, it is the predetermined factor necessary to the building of a perfect moral universe, the principle of resistance which *makes the wheel revolve*. But when in man the balance is broken, when abstract ἀμαρτία falls into concrete ἀμαρτήματα,

when tendencies, useful in themselves, outstep the bounds, and become the overmastering note of the personality, then, as in the case of Pharaoh in the Apostle's illustration (Rom. ix. 17), the unerring overrule works unbending material into that portion of the universal scheme in which such material may find a place. God is not to be cheated of sovereignty by evil. He adjusts the evil, and ultimately cures the sinner, even though the latter be first broken on the wheel of his own turning. Is moral evil, then, actually *determined* or merely *turned to account*? is the question which seems to form the crux of the passage before us.

We speak in human terms, but a very little reflection will show that He who is "greater than all," "of Whom, and to Whom, and through Whom are all things," can foreknow nothing that was not also predetermined. A wide human provision may sometimes prepare for clearly foreseen contingency, but *there can be no contingency with God*. Nothing can fall outside the purpose of Omniscience. That the exercise by man of his measure of volition would result in his yielding to tendencies that were implanted only to be resisted, was assuredly foreknown, and as assuredly predetermined. Since the great end of all experience is the development of potential will and freedom, the first faint, tentative efforts towards that freedom

—albeit they led man directly into sin—must have fallen within the Divine process by which man becomes a full moral being. Evil is the result of obedience to desire *unregulated by knowledge* ; by which knowledge we mean the selective recognition of the desires which make for true progress, which comes only by repeated yielding to those which conduce to pain. This kind of knowledge is a very different thing from mere opinion based on incessant repetitions of “Thou shalt not.” The common cry of the professional moralist that we all “know better” falls very often short of the truth. We certainly know better in the sense that we have been *taught* better ; but teaching of the external order does not always result in *knowledge*. The Divine law of the “needs-be of offences” requires that there shall be but one teacher of true morality, experience. Until that teacher has given us the only knowledge of morals worth having, we shall continue to exercise our power of choice in the deluded impression that we are thereby witnessing to our freedom. As a matter of fact, power of choice is only a confession of ignorance, for perfect knowledge leaves neither room nor necessity for choice. He who knows his way to a desired destination has no choice of directions, unless his mind is bent on straying.

But a final difficulty has still to be faced. If,

it will be urged, we are speaking of evil as it is commonly known and experienced, such evil is not the helpful, opposing force that preserves equilibrium, and stimulates endeavour. We see it rather as a deadly power that swamps the soul, murders its divinity, crushes and kills its very power of resistance. The air is not the foe of the bird, nor the soil the foe of the seed, for the resistance of each is exquisitely proportioned to the organisms they surround. But in the realm of moral evil we see disharmony opposed to harmony in such proportions that the good has but little chance of rearing its modest head against the tempest of opposing forces ; and righteous causes are always causes lost. In short, we utterly fail to see the resisting agency in *helpful* operation in the world. We find it on all sides seeking not to stimulate, but to overwhelm.

Here the difficulty is that of accounting for the *excess* of the energy that is urging the soul to growth by means of its contact with objects of sense. The *ὀργή* aspect of God, we have said, is good—we cannot over-emphasise this statement ; its *excess* is what leads to the long category of carnal sins. Is anything to be said in explanation of this excess ?

We must first remember that the centrifugal principle, whose essence is good, but whose results

are often evil, represents a stage in the human past when struggle, and therefore failure, was practically unknown, for the reason that man had not yet evolved a standard. The earthward force was virtually alone in its workings. Its task was to consolidate and build a personal, separate centre in the as yet nebulous and chaotic human soul. Man had to learn to define himself; his Ego had to come within limits, and be born. To fight for self, and the earth on which that self was to be cradled, was the Divine task of Nature's primitive forces. Their turbulence, self-concentration, and entire selfishness were the inevitable factors in primitive evolution. And after the dawning of the opposite, the centripetal tendency—that which the Apostle calls the New Man—which did not come into full manifestation in the soul until a comparatively later stage in progress, which has not indeed become fully manifested even yet, the early animal principle persisted as a remnant of what had once been the normal and the righteous line of growth. Our study of the Old Man has taken us further into the idea. That this principle is not yet obsolete, that it is even in excess of the upward impulses of the true self, is but another way of stating that the race is yet in its childhood, although signs of adolescence are not wanting.

Ages have been spent by the race in the slow

building of vehicles in which it could express the New Man when His day should arrive—vehicles which could only be fashioned by the *repeated experience of inadequacy*. Each time the *ὀργή* force assailed them and overcame their imperfect resisting powers, the man learned his building lesson a little more fully. He travelled one step further along the painful road of realised imperfection. The principle on which Nature worked was to *set him a task over the head of his attainments*. In this way all true teachers work. For were the balance between effort and attainment absolutely adjusted, no progress would be possible. A child who does only what he can do well and easily, eventually fails to acquire that which he cannot do.

The excess of the *ὀργή* force is therefore a necessity of moral growth, in that it calls out from man his uttermost powers of endeavour. It is, moreover, a constant reminder that the things that are really worth the doing are not those that are lightly accomplished. The moral life is a *great* attainment, and has adversaries and resistances proportionately great.

But this is not all. For many persons the evil consequent on excess of centrifugal tendency has to be experienced in all its primitive unrestraint, because as yet their inner man is irresponsive to other than coarse and violent stimuli. But at this

stage such excess has not properly become evil ; indeed, for such persons *it is not excess at all*. It represents the turbulent forces of the natural man at work unchecked in their appropriate field. Many there are whom the world calls men for whom evil is not evil because they have not yet been aroused to the possibilities of good. The sins they commit are sins only to those who judge them from a higher standard. They are thinking animals, in whom the link is yet to be born that shall bind them to their true and nobler self. Evil, as we understand the term, is a necessary educator in the lives of such. By it the animal learns his animalism. He realises painfully, and by a long process, that sin implies an opposite, righteousness. We, then, who would be remitters of sin to those below us are inspired by this consideration to a finer patience and a greater hope, knowing that pollution cannot touch the Divine Self of any man, and is, in many cases, the great inevitable factor in the training-school of experience. Moreover, certain words of the Christ about "retaining sin"¹ confirm our sense of the necessity of the old condition for many who have not yet the power or the will to enter into the new.

The "needs-be of offences" will be understood only if we look away from questions of immediate

¹ John xx. 23.

morality to distant and ultimate issues. It is impossible to over-accentuate the need for taking long views of life. This problem of the responsibility of the Potter for the vessels of destruction cannot be solved short of millennia, for a cause that is to be the ultimate instrument of good may have effects that appear temporarily evil when judged by the standard of immediate morality—effects which yet eventuate, in the long-run, as very considerable assets to human welfare. To return to the Apostle's illustration : Pharaoh was a cosmic instrument of the New Dispensation. By the inexorable law of consequences, his heart had been hardened because he himself had incurred the hardening. But he was the man in the right place. Under an easy rule the severance of the Egyptian yoke, essential to the development of Jewish history, would have been retarded from lack of incentive. The Divine threads of destiny, therefore, were as truly in the hands of the stubborn tyrant as in those of the patriot Moses. There was, however, no interference with Pharaoh's measure of volition, but only the utilising of the character which he himself had built, of which the worst features were accentuated for an ultimate end of good, under the strict law that "unto him that hath shall be given," whether the "having" be traits of good or evil. "He that is unrighteous,"

says Divine justice to the evil-doer, "let him be unrighteous still more."¹

The inexorableness of the law of the "still more," by which tendencies—whether high or low—multiply themselves according to the frequency and the intensity with which they are obeyed, presents us with the workings of "*ὁργή*" from another point of view. In spite of the inevitable hardening that comes of resistance to a known good, man is yet saved from his own undoing by the relentless mercy of the wrath of God. The forces of disintegration which follow on moral evil, and gain momentum with every unchecked sin, are opposed by a counter-force which makes turmoil in the soul lest the hardening process should follow the law of the "still more" to final and inevitable death. The natural tendency to go from bad to worse is resisted at every point by the Divine love, which, because it makes for life instead of death, is bound in the long-run to win. Its success is often obscure and doubtful; it may, as in the case of Pharaoh, be reduced to the length of the complete destruction of a personality that had gone too far for restitution in the present age; but inasmuch as the creature "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption,"² even spiritual death itself must be but the prelude to a new birth in which "God remakes the

¹ Rev. xxii. 11.

² Rom. viii. 21.

soul He else had made in vain.” The “ὀργή,” or “wrath” of God, then, we may regard as the force that not only makes for destruction, when destruction is necessary, but which also resists destruction, and assists re-creation by the impetus of the Spirit which is life.

To recapitulate briefly our thought : the human soul, during its passage through life, is hedged about by the limitations consequent on a flesh-nature that is under imperfect control. This state we have termed abstract ἀμαρτία, sin in the sense of a coming short of the great perfection and fulness of being which is the potential heritage of every son of God. St Paul also terms this state ματαιότης, or “vanity,”¹ a word closely connected with the Hindu Maya. Ματαιότης is not in itself sin, *in the sense of moral reprobateness* ; it is, however, the essential cause of every fall into concrete acts of sin. Now the question of predetermination lies in the cause rather than in the effect. “Vanity” is essential to the development of the creature up to a certain stage in his progress, and is therefore within the will of God, and outside the will of man. The specific transgressions—“falls by the way” (παραπτώματα),—consequent on subjection to vanity, are, however, more or less within the control of the individual. There is no real contradiction here, because

¹ Rom. viii. 20.

ματαιότης does not stand alone ; the creature is not only subjected to vanity—he is also under the law of its Divine complement, grace. Man is intended slowly to overcome vanity by opposing to it the light of Divine truth. The mirage and confusion of sense, desire, and separateness are not the real self ; they are but shadows to be chased by the up-rising of the New Man whose dawn above the hills of Time is infinitely slow, but inevitably sure. As grace abounds more and more, vanity will become a gradually lessening quantity ; but grace, when in manifestation, is under the laws of the manifest, and its growth may not be unduly hastened. The responsibility of the individual lies in giving proper scope for the natural development of the New Man, for He is the end of the “earnest expectation of the creature,” and in His predestined day the bondage of corruption *shall* be exchanged for the “liberty of the glory of the children of God.”¹

¹ Rom. viii. 21.

CHAPTER IX

DEATH. (ABSTRACT.)

I. THE ADAM-DEATH. II. THE CHRIST-DEATH

I. THE ADAM-DEATH

THE Apostle is not content with the representation of *ἀμαρτία* as state ; he deals with it also from the point of view of consequence. As we have seen in the previous chapters, the development in man of the isolated self caused him to become out of harmony with the essential conditions of his spiritual "Eden." Poetically rendered, his departure was expulsion by Divine fiat ; literally, it was the cessation, by a process of inevitable change, of the Eden condition within himself. He died to Eden, or Heaven, by becoming alive to its converse, self. Thus, when the Apostle speaks of sin entering the world, and death by sin, he is stating a natural corollary from the fact of the sin-state. "In the Adam all die" ;¹ "Through the

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 22.

trespass of the one the many died";¹ these and many more statements indicating his recognition of the practical inseverability of ἁμαρτία and θάνατος (sin and death). The two expressions are synonyms of one fact.

But the death of which he here speaks is a far profounder experience than the mere liberation of the spirit from a physical vehicle. Mankind died in the "Adam" when, for the gaining of self-realisation in the world of form, it broke touch with the Divine Consciousness which was its home and its inheritance on the plane of true being. Whatever may have been the mystic nature and organic consequences of the "Fall," its essence consisted in the awakening in man of a lower, separating will, that caused him automatically to seek in material conditions the gratification of the dawning instinct for personal, separate existence. By willing to live the isolated life, he committed spiritual suicide with regard to the life in God. Therefore death in the Pauline sense of the term is no arbitrarily imposed physical penalty for a spiritual offence, but the result of a downward line of development which has its lawful place in a universe which is balanced by contraries. Death is the Sin-principle carried to its ultimate extreme. The state is not a mere possi-

¹ Rom. v. 15.

bility only ; the fleshly man *is* already dead ; his natural life is the life of the tomb. "For the mind of the flesh is death ;¹ it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be." "If ye live after the flesh, ye must die."² "The wages of sin is death."³ On the other hand, it must be remembered that the pivotal teaching of the Gospel is the resurrection from the dead. *Final* death has no place in the Pauline philosophy ; it is "the last enemy to be destroyed,"⁴ truly, but there is no uncertainty as to its ultimate destruction. To teach otherwise were to frustrate Omnipotence, and to deny the essentially immortal. *For life, whether physical, mental, or spiritual, may never be killed ;* it "dies" only in the sense of becoming dissociated with a particular form, and a particular environment. Pauline "death," therefore, means that, as a result of certain inimical conditions, correspondence with a spiritual environment has become no longer possible, and the soul which has made itself responsive to conditions of a dense and material nature will find itself "alive" to such, and "dead" to, or detached from, those which should be essentially its own. That it may be quickened and restored is, however, the great hope and glory of the Gospel of Christ. "Even

¹ Rom. viii. 6.² Rom. viii. 13.³ Rom. vi. 23.⁴ I Cor. xv. 26.

when we were dead in sins hath he quickened us together with Christ.”¹

Man cannot ultimately defeat the Divine Will for his sanctification without making himself the equal of Omnipotence. But he may be permitted to follow, for his education, a perilous path of which the consequences are made clear to him as he proceeds. It must be remembered that the journey to the Goal of Being is not an automatic pursuit of a road of inevitable success; like all that is truly Divine, it involves great risks. Every soul may miss the Mark in the sense of seriously widening the distance between himself and it; nay, without the possibility of loss there is neither meaning nor value in gain. But the most repeated deflection cannot *ultimately* defeat an end which must, in the long-run, be assured, since there is in every man a Saviour who “died” in and for him on the very moment of his “death” into the material state. In other words, the Christ-death, which we are shortly to consider, is the absolutely unfailing guarantee to man that even spiritual death itself is of the temporal order, and must therefore cease on the day of the subjection of all things.

If, then, the Apostle spares no plainness of speech in his denunciation of the *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς*, or fleshly mind, the subtle instrument of personality

¹ Eph. ii. 5.

in which sin is generated, and in which it works a powerful defiance of Godward movements, no less emphatic is his call to resurrection : "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and the Christ shall shine upon thee."¹ "Awake," *i.e.* "resume a former condition ; abandon your present identification with the body of death, or animal consciousness ; become what you were before the building of the fleshly mind obscured the true memory of yourself in God" : so we might paraphrase this burning message of restoration and life. To be once more "awakened out of sleep," restored to our pristine self, the New Man who is yet the Old and First Man of a forgotten Eden ; to be dead to sin, and alive to grace,—this is salvation, this the rationale of the Christian Gospel. We might sum up the Apostolic teaching on the vital questions of sin and death in a few words.

Scriptural sin and scriptural death are very nearly synonymous. They are the same fact viewed from different standpoints. Sin entered the world when man first began to exist as a separate entity on the lower planes, and used his dawning will in the direction of self-gratification, and for the strengthening of a personal centre. St Paul, by his reference to the Eden story, places this differentiation in a pre-physical condition : whether of this earth or of

¹ Eph. v. 14.

some other world, we are not told. Death, on the other hand, is the extension into material conditions of that state of separateness which is the great opposing agency, the enemy of true life in the Spirit. "It was not the death of the body that was the doom of sin : death was on the planet thousands of years before the accepted date of the history of the Fall : 'In the day that thou eatest thou shalt die.' But Adam's physical body is said to have lived nearly a hundred years after the day on which he ate." The doom of sin is the relegation of the soul to the tomb of the lower consciousness, and every wilful encouragement of the personal, isolating sense, every act that is a violation of the truth of solidarity, strengthens this spiritual devitalisation. Conversely, the rising from the dead will be the ultimate awakening of the soul from the tomb of the sin-state, and its deliberate entrance into a new order of spiritual consciousness. There are few to whom the full awakening has come in the present age, but the sleep of many is waxing lighter.

II. THE CHRIST-DEATH

The death of man in *ἀμαρτία*, his loss of pristine, Edenic purity that he might win to a fully realised sonship, has its necessary counterpart in the death of Christ.

The mystery of the Cross is in very truth the corner-stone of Apostolic thought, as of all Christian philosophy, for it is the secret and foundation of the universe itself. It will be seen, when we come to examine the teachings of early Christian mysticism on this subject, that the *σταυρός* (cross) was a symbol for wider ideas than those with which later Christianity has come exclusively to associate the term. *Σταυρός* was a specific historical event, but it was also much more. It represented first and foremost the great World-Mystery. Creation was the Calvary of God, and the Divine Sufferer He by Whom the worlds came into being, and in Whom they are eternally sustained.

This truth had its several aspects—macrocosmic, microcosmic, and individual. The macrocosmic aspect is the Cross as it is expressed in the greatest of all sacrifices—the Sacrifice of God in a Universe that could not be without the forth-pouring of the life of the Logos, and its restriction within the limits of form and substance. When the Apostle declares, “In Him all things cohere”¹ (or consist); “Of Him, and to Him, and through Him are all things,”² it is manifest that no secondary causes, no life other than His life, can be the basis of the manifested worlds; nor can this life be expressed within the defined limits of a

¹ Col. i. 17.

² Rom. xi. 36.

universe of form, save by a Sacrifice unthinkable in its vastness, in its wondrous self-identification with the lowest limits of the finite. Wide as the world are the arms of this Cosmic Cross ; from highest Heaven to deepest underworld extends its crossway beam, symbol of the quickening life that transforms Chaos into Cosmos, and makes of abortive matter the glad mother of the Son of God. This is the universal and impersonal aspect of the mystery of the Cross, the "Power of God,"¹ apart from which the Apostle is "determined to know nothing,"² there being indeed nothing further to know, since he who is really acquainted with that mystery in its outer and inner, its universal and particular aspects, has the key to all knowledge both of himself and the universe.

Of the Cross, from its Cosmic point of view, a distinguished writer speaks thus :—

"God 'laying down His life,' the Unconditioned Intelligence laying down His life, and laying it down for us, would obviously refer to His laying it down in what we call Creation. God, under the constraint of love, laying down, diffusing, differentiating His unthinkable being, His all-producing Spirit, into the limitations of what we call matter ; the Creator evolving the creaturely form in the natural creation, wherein He is hidden, till that form comes

¹ 1 Cor. i. 19.

² 1 Cor. ii. 2.

to due self-consciousness and self-assertion ; God thus becoming the all-containing Soul, Life, Love in all that is ; and having thus 'laid down His life' in nature, He realises Himself in man, as the highest expression of His diffused, 'laid-down' life on this planet. . . . Creation was the self-sacrifice of the Absolute. A universally diffused consciousness implies a universally diffused sensitiveness to all that affects both the outward and the inward life of those beings in whom He thus dwells. We do not yet fully know the hidden reason in the nature of things for the fiery ordeal of suffering, through which alone the creation can be qualified for the ultimate perfection which God has purposed as creation's final law. We do not yet know. Some day we shall. But God knew it before He laid down His life in creation. He knew that, being immanent in all, He must suffer in all, must travail in pain in all. God is not, therefore, an onlooker from without upon the sufferings of the world, but a sharer from within. And there is not a pang in this suffering universe that does not pierce the heart of God before it reaches man. 'Hereby perceive we the love of God,' that, knowing this, knowing that even a sparrow could not fall without our Father, knowing that He must travail in pain within the limitation of the universe, and in the bodies and souls of men and animals,

He still laid down His life in creation that we might be.”¹

The great World-Passion, the Calvary of God in Creation, was the kernel of the Gnosis of the ancient world, and in all countries where the Gnosis had established itself the sacred symbol of the Cross testified to the existence, in part at least, of this profound philosophical conception, distorted and phallicised though it occasionally became under materialising influences. That St Paul was acquainted with the Cosmic view of this doctrine is clear by his terminology, which is that of the Mystery schools of Græco-Egypt. “It has now indeed been proved,” says an able scholar, “that the Gnosis was pre-Christian, and that in what is generally called Gnosticism we are dealing with a Christianised Gnosis which demonstrably existed in the time of Paul, and which Paul found already existing in the churches.”² Since the esoteric doctrine of the Cross was the pivot of this form of Christianised Gnosis, it will be necessary to ascertain as far as possible the under-meaning attached to the idea by the more philosophical minds in the early Christian communities ; this aspect of our subject, however, will come more appropriately in

¹ Archdeacon Wilberforce : *Speaking Good of His Name*, p. 216.

² *The Hymn of Jesus*, by G. R. S. Mead, p. 20.

the concluding chapter when we endeavour to sum up the great ideas associated with the "Gospel of Rightness." We pass now to the two other and more intimate points of view from which the Apostle treats this great mystery—those we have termed the microcosmic and the individual.

As the "death of Christ," from the macrocosmic standpoint, was the limitation of the Divine life in a universe of form and matter, so that death from the microcosmic view was the Eternal Christ becoming immanent in "every man that cometh into the world."¹ In the differentiated individualities that make up the human race God sows a Divine Seed, a mystery that is none other than Himself in potential being, His own life "laid down" in human soil, imprisoned within material conditions, made subject to the laws of process and becoming. Wondrous the mystery of the "Christ in you, the hope of glory"; yet more wondrous the consent to limitation involved in the "death" of the Divine life to its own fulness, that the race in which it sows itself may become ultimate partakers of the Divine Nature! In every man Christ is crucified, and in many He is "crucified afresh,"² nailed again and again to the cross of the lower man even when, in the process of human development, the hour has struck for the rising from the dead. Thus the

¹ John i. 9.

² Heb. vi. 6.

Eternal Christ, voluntarily crucified in the man of flesh, is the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,"¹ the Saviour and "Silent Witness," who is eventually to rise from His deep entombment in the Adam nature, and commence in the human heart the day of the great Reconciliation. "For if, while we were enemies (far off, in the separated consciousness), we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved in His life; and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."²

Here a clear distinction is drawn between the Universal Christ, who "reconciles" man to God by the unifying impulse of His own life laid down in the human soul, and the individual "Lord Jesus Christ" by whom the doctrine of the great Reconciliation was first given to the Apostle and his disciples.

The expression of the great Sacrifice in the *individual* Christ, through whose outpoured life fresh streams of the Cosmic life were given anew to the world in the throes of a dark crisis, is the third aspect of the Christ-death, and the one to which the Apostle is especially devoted. At the same time, the distinction between universal

¹ Rev. xiii. 8.

² Rom. v. 10.

and particular is never absent from his thought, even when not specifically expressed. In his writings the death of Χριστός (Christ) generally, though not invariably, marks the philosophic and universal aspect of the truth; the death of ὁ Χριστός (the Christ), or Ἰησοῦς Χριστός (Jesus Christ), is the *particular expression*, at a given epoch, of the Universal Sacrifice whose action in human hearts is perpetual and eternal, though its specific manifestation in Jesus may have been "once for all."

It may be well briefly to recapitulate this great threefold Death of Christ, within which the whole Cosmic Plan is comprised. We have first Cosmic Death; the outpouring of the Divine life, and its imprisonment in the myriad forms which constitute a universe,—truly a death in matter from the standpoint of the limitations accepted by the Divine when in contact with the form. We have, secondly, Microcosmic Death, or the laid-down life of the Logos in man, and His deep entombment in the shades of the lower consciousness. Finally, when the world-Christ has reached its highest development in a human soul, there arises the specific representative of the Cosmic process, the individual Saviour, whose death and resurrection are expressions on the physical plane of the Cosmic events of which He is the accredited symbol.

Through Him a stimulus is given to the immanent Divine germ in man ; life is imparted on the inner planes, starting from a necessary individual focus ; and the limitations of the Adam nature, the tomb of the Universal Christ, are taken into Himself, to be finally transcended in the name of the race with whom He is essentially one.

As man in matter has two deaths to die ; first a death *into* vanity on his contact with the limitations of a flesh-nature ; and secondly a death *from* vanity into life, on the dawning of the New Man within him,—so the Christ in Jesus, the typical man, “dies” first to the “glory He had with the Father before the world was,” on taking upon Him the shades of the *ἀμαρτία* nature ; and secondly, to the limitations of that nature when He abandoned it on the Cross for ever. “For the death that He died, He died unto sin once ; but the life that He liveth, He liveth unto God.”¹ In other words, the true death and the true resurrection of the Christ were His voluntary acceptance of the limitations of the Adam nature, and His ultimate resumption of the fulness of life in God, which had been for a time overclouded.

Sacrifice was the ladder by which the Christ climbed to His glory. In a passage abounding with profound and significant contrasts,² we are

¹ Rom. vi. 10.

² Phil. ii. 6.

taught something of the mysterious and essential imperative which compels the Infinite to the lowest depths of the finite ere the Divine can be self-realised, and the human redeemed. A paraphrase may help to elucidate one or two obscurities in the received translation.

"Have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, who, though originally a manifestation of God, did not become foremost in grasping¹ the yet higher honour of being on an equality with God—a consummation which might have been His—but emptied Himself of Divine powers, that He might grasp instead at what was to Him a greater prize, the condition of a bond-slave in the human family, that the race might be lifted to God. And having accepted human limitations, He humbled Himself yet further by becoming subject to the lowest

¹ The difficult expression οὐχ ἀρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο may be literally rendered, "did not lead a raid upon the (state of) being equal with God," in connection with which *cf.* "the kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. xi. 12). St Paul may have desired to teach that the highest prize in the Kingdom of Heaven was deliberately foregone by the Christ, that He might stoop to the level of humanity. By renouncing the ultimate goal for the sake of His lesser brethren, He gained it, but not by way of individual acquisition. This passage is significant from its remarkable play of contrasts. There is first the antithesis between two objects of "grasping," the uttermost of glory on the one hand and of lowliness on the other; further we note a contrast between two modes of manifestation, the "form" of God, and the "form of a bond-servant," and finally that between loss and gain, humiliation and reward. The passage is an epitome of a profound philosophic idea which we shall hope to observe in detail in the following chapter.

necessity of the finite, even death—ay, and death by the Cross. Therefore, a renunciation so complete receives a proportionate exaltation, and the Lordship of the Christ is the result of His descent from the extreme of spiritual glory to the extreme of finite limitation.”

But the Christ, when He climbed, did not, nay, could not climb alone. “He returned to the Father,” says an intuitive writer, “bearing in His bosom the sons of men.” His reward was the perfection of “them which Thou hast given me.” That perfection, though not yet a realised fact on the plane of time, is in the Pleroma beyond the Great Illusion a promise and a certainty. “He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the age,” says the Apostle;¹ “We have been saved, and called with a holy calling before æonian times,”²—ere the shades of vanity had begun to fall around our unwilling spirits. Even in Eden we were promised the great Restoration, which is now “made manifest” by the appearing of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who hath “abolished death,” and lifted our ascending spirits upon the path of the great Return. So the Apostle proclaims his Gospel of salvation and hope.

¹ Eph. i. 4.

² 2 Tim. i. 9-10.

CHAPTER X

DEATH. (PARTICULAR.)

II. THE CHRIST-DEATH (*continued*) (THE DEATH OF JESUS)

WE pass now to a more detailed consideration of the Pauline doctrine of the Atonement, which the belief of Christendom has come to connect exclusively with the death of Jesus. Under the strong emphasis of ages, this specific aspect of the Calvary truth has become strangely distorted in values. Many theological schools regard the Crucifixion as the price paid to the justice of God for the restoration of a fallen humanity. Christ, the Lamb without spot or blemish, made possible by His sacrifice what would not have been possible in any other way—the “passing over of the sins done aforetime,”¹ for which the elaborate sacrificial system of Moses had been devised as a sort of temporary expedient, pending the coming of the true Victim. These and similar views, the crudity

¹ Rom. iii. 25.

of which would have revolted his subtle and metaphysical intellect, have been fathered upon St Paul for no other reason than that his theology is clothed in symbols drawn from Rabbinical modes of thought. It is true that for him the Old Testament had a meaning which was not only mystical and symbolic, but was intentionally so. According to his view, "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning"; therefore, the nearer we can bring that learning to the interpretation of the new Gospel of Rightness, the more fully will the Gospel be revealed and understood. Hence his use of the Rabbinical legend of the Fall of man in Adam, which he links with much subtlety of reasoning to the Rise of man in Christ; hence also his choice of terms associated with the Levitical system of blood-sacrifice to symbolise that which was in itself a mighty and all-potent symbol, the outpouring of a perfect life, so completely abandoned to the Divine Will as to become for all time the type of Sacrifice Incarnate. Thus we find such expressions as: "Christ gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odour of a sweet smell"¹; "Christ redeemed us, having become a curse for us"²; "Whom God set forth to be a propitiation by faith in His blood"³; "Being justified by His blood, we shall be saved

¹ Eph. v. 2.² Gal. iii. 13.³ Rom. iii. 25.

from wrath through Him . . . reconciled through the death of His Son . . . our Lord Christ Jesus, through whom we have now received the at-one-ment"¹; "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins"²; "One mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all."

Out of these passages, and others of a similar character by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, a doctrine was evolved by succeeding theologians which was at worst a gross libel, and at best a poor caricature of Apostolic truth. But its growth was slow. Ante-Nicene theology—that of the Greek fathers, at all events—had formulated little of a positive character with regard to the place in Redemption of the death of Christ. The first inception of a doctrine is generally to be traced either to Irenæus, who presents the rudiments of Greek Christianity, or to Tertullian, the father of the doctrinal system of the West, or to both. And in Irenæus, the doctrine of redemption through the death of Christ was held in a vague and pictorial sense, and formulated with great lack of verbal precision. In him appears the first trace of the tendency that afterwards became common among the Greek theologians

¹ Rom. v. 9-11.

² 1 Tim. ii. 5-6.

to make the Incarnation of Jesus of greater importance than the Crucifixion and Resurrection. On the other hand, Tertullian, whose mind was forensic, gave prominence to the darker aspects of religion—sin, justice, wrath, fear—and made dogmatic what the subtler mind of Irenæus expressed pictorially. The death of Jesus was that of a God-provided Victim for the sins of man, which were vicariously cursed in His Person as He hung on the Tree of Shame.¹

Augustine, who built upon the foundations of Tertullian, definitely formulated what he had left incomplete. To him we owe the specific notion of the Atonement as part of a "Plan of Salvation" that had been pre-ordained from the foundation of the world. In his writings the earleir conception of a ransom to Satan begins to be displaced by the yet more repellent idea of a ransom to God Himself. This was left for Anselm to develop at length in the most important of his works, *Cur Deus Homo*, in which he rests the theory of the Atonement on three positions :—

That God's justice and wounded honour demand satisfaction.

That such satisfaction can be made only by a Personality who is equally God and Man, and therefore sinless.

¹ *Vide* Tertullian, *Adversus Judeos*, ch. x.

That the death of this Being satisfies the requirements of Divine Justice because it is a voluntary offering, and, as such, of infinite merit. God's Justice being thus appeased, His mercy may be extended to man.

After Abelard had modified this scheme by introducing an important ethical bearing, in which he made room for the consciousness of the individual to be redeemed, the theory became an undisputed part of the system of Scholastic Christianity, until the Lutheran controversialists, in the persons of Osiander and Striegel, raised new and important issues. One of these thinkers realised that Luther's theology made no provision for the time-element in the doctrine of the Atonement, such as the mediæval Church had provided in the Perpetuity of the Sacrifice of the Mass. Osiander, therefore, proposed to distinguish between Redemption as the result of an historical event, and Justification, which was the influence of that event renewed daily in the individual soul. Striegel, on the other hand, declared that the effect of Calvary was mainly to change the attitude of God to the human race, and as a consequence a man could, by faith, avail himself of this change, and be put into right relations with a now benevolent Father. The outcome of the controversy was the two distinct theories of the Atonement adopted, on

the one hand, by Lutherans, and on the other by Calvinists, the latter of whom found in Osiander's criticism the germ of what is known as limitation in the Atonement.¹

These two theories, perpetually contested, modified, and reasserted, have formed the battle-ground of Protestant polemics from that day to the present. What power they possess as a moral lever is due less to the over-statement of Apostolic teaching to which they owe their being, than to the great mystic truth which is the foundation of all that St Paul wrote or taught concerning the death of Christ.

This truth we shall hope to bring out by a brief examination of the three main words on which the doctrine of the Atonement has been based.

I. 'Απολύτρωσις, redemption, literally a buying back, or the giving of something in exchange.²

II. Καταλλαγή, reconciliation, inaccurately translated atonement.³

III. 'Ιλαστήριον, ἱλασμός, propitiation.⁴

These three expressions, powerful, suggestive, and pregnant with mystic thought, are parables for awakening the intuition ; they are not theological technicalities aiming at exact definition. The first

¹ Vide *Ency. Brit.*, vol. xv. p. 85.

² See Col. i. 14 ; 1 Cor. i. 30 ; Eph. i. 7, 14 ; Rom. iii. 24 ; also εξαγοράζω ; see Gal. iii. 13-14 ; Gal. iv. 5.

³ Rom. v. 11 ; 2 Cor. v. 18-19.

⁴ Rom. iii. 25.

word, ἀπολύτρωσις, redemption, signifies the giving of something in exchange ; hence the notion of purchase, or of acquisition by sacrifice. “Ye were sealed into the redemption of the thing acquired.”¹ “Ye are not your own, ye were bought with a price.” But the seller is not the Devil, as early Patristic theology would have had us believe, neither is the transaction one between Infinite Mercy and Infinite Justice. The true ἀπολύτρωσις touches the inner springs of being ; it is not an external adjustment of relations between a man’s soul and a God outside him ; it is rather the slow and ceaseless process of the God-nature developing within, by which a man is won to the realisation of a forgotten sonship. Redemption becomes a dogma by virtue of its being an essential, spiritual experience. It is the foundation and substance of the mystic life projected by the intellect into form and dogma on the external plane ; for what the soul feels and experiences, the intellect externalises and formulates.

As spiritual consciousness develops, the form with which the truth was first identified is seen in an altered light. Though retaining its prominence in the mystic life—for it is never discarded—it ceases to be viewed as a fact *per se*, but is accepted as a symbol on the external plane of essentials which

¹ Eph. i. 14.

have their being on the plane of the abstract and internal. Thus, when we find a teacher of advanced metaphysical intelligence presenting profound verities in terms of commerce on the one hand, and of blood-sacrifice on the other, we may be certain that he is definitely selecting a form of symbolism that will appeal with peculiar significance to the particular minds to which he is addressing himself. The order of the Apostle's thought was always "first that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual." He knew implicitly what we now know explicitly, that with the process of growth comes the gradual shifting of the threshold of truth from the surface to the sub-surface, what was formerly held to be true in and of itself being eventually regarded as the necessarily limited *expression* of truth that is never exhausted, nor even fully revealed, by the sum total of its manifestations. Therefore the ἀπολύτρωσις, which is one of the deepest truths of the spiritual life, may be expressed only tentatively in terms of a human transaction. It is an eternal process of substitution by which a man reverses the entire scheme of human values, and makes prominent in consciousness what had been hitherto but a dim background in his unfelt, spiritual being. By its operation the laws of the Spirit which is life supplant the legalism whose source is the Old Adam.

The truly redeemed man is he who has tasted at least the beginning of the great Restoration ; he stands where he can feel the stirrings of that Divine consciousness which was his in the pre-natal days ere he had broken unity with God and eaten of the fruit of separation and self. He has set out to regain the spiritual life—but at a cost, for, like all things in a balanced universe, it too has its price, which only the dauntless, perchance, are prepared to pay. For the purchase-money of salvation is the sacrifice, by reversal, of the normal standpoint—the material world, the fleshly heart, the selfish will, the separated consciousness ; these things are to be no longer the ruling factors in the life, because reversal, or the giving of the lower in exchange for the higher, is the eternal law of redemption throughout the universe, and each man must find his own purchase-money. How, then, can the physical life of Jesus, outpoured at a given hour and place, avail to effect what must be personal, interior, deeply rooted in the individual will ?

We see the matter thus. On the one hand, the ἀπολύτρωσις consists in the offering, by the lower self to the higher, of the human, separated will, as a condition of release from the tyranny of the Adam nature. On the other hand, it is the result of the direct infusion into the lower nature of a

higher order of life, which ultimately ransoms or buys back to pristine purity what was originally made in the Divine Image. Only by the action of the Divine Spirit on the heart of flesh can the necessary exchange be brought about by which a man passes from death unto life, for the lower nature cannot and does not of itself initiate the transaction. Now the individual Christ was a representation, in a specific embodiment, of the great Sacrifice which is ceaselessly in operation in human souls, and none the less completely so in many who are unconscious of its presence. In this Sacrifice the laid-down Divine life is ever striving with man for the restoration of his self-turned will to God. Its aim is to redeem the "fallen" self by substituting a Divine standard for the rule of the *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός*, or fleshly mind. Thus its action is perpetual and eternal, and cannot have been *initiated* by any event on the Time-plane, however mystic and stupendous its import. But an event that is in Time, in that it may be a symbol of a fact that is Eternal, has an importance proportioned to the fact which it symbolises. And if the fact be one of the most vital in human experience, its chosen symbol will partake of the power of the thing symbolised ; the very existence of the symbol as an outward and visible sign of a universal, hidden, and eternal Power ceaselessly poured

forth in exchange for the ills and weaknesses of men, puts those who make use of it in conscious touch with the Reality whose expression in a very particular sense it is. "We are conformed to the image of His death," says the Apostle, as though he would affirm that by a symbol, or outer representation, we are united to the great Death of which the Calvary event is the "image," or picturing forth in time-relations, and to which the disciple must shape himself in heart if he would know the life that is life indeed. In short, the life given in exchange is the sign-manual of a perfected Christ. Such an One is living, both symbolically and actually, the race's life within the "form of a servant," which He assumes as a touch-point with humanity, a centre whence the Divine Spirit may well forth in blessing, and into which may be received the poisons of the sin-nature He comes to "take away." Therefore the Apostolic affirmation that "He was made" (or became) "sin that we might become the Rightness of God in Him" is a statement of the principle of ἀπολύτρωσις, or exchange, which is not only consistent with the laws of the spiritual life, but is the actual condition of there being a spiritual life at all. A Christ offers the highest in exchange for the lowest, and, by associating Himself with the sin-state, associates also the sin-state with Himself, so neutralising, or

“putting it away.” It thus becomes conceivable that the depths of the finite to which He voluntarily stooped in His sacrifice and death were submitted, in Him, to a great alchemical transformation, absorbed, purified, and transmuted. In short, the ἀπολύτρωσις of a Christ is a process of spiritual alchemy in which all spiritual men take part, for it is the peculiar task of the “Children of the Kingdom,” and by its activity in a soul the “Lord knoweth them that are His.” The spiritual alchemist takes away sin by the sacrifice, or giving forth, of himself. He is continually bringing a new and diviner life to play upon the opposite forces of the Adam nature ; his health is offered for the ills of men ; his joy for their afflictions ; his sorrows balance human shortcomings ; and by his stripes the world is healed. The great, eternal, immutable law of the balance of opposites by opposites, that law which keeps the universe in equilibrium, nay, which provides for there being a universe at all, is equally the principle of the spiritual nature in activity. Transcendently, then, is it true of Him in whom the New Man had come to complete possession.

The ἀπολύτρωσις effected by the individual Christ for men follows inevitably on the ascription of Christhood to Jesus. To St Paul He was without a shadow of uncertainty the great Revealer of

the Spiritual Man. Therefore the saying, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the putting away of sins," was but a symbolic form of stating the world-old mystic truth which is, at the same time, the great law of the Spiritual Man: that the outpouring of the highest life upon conditions of disharmony and disease restores to those conditions the wholeness that once was theirs, as a physician redeems or buys back to health, at the cost of his hard-won knowledge, the bodies and minds in which physical "sin" is at work. Such sublime "forthgiveness" from those who have attained to those who have yet to attain is part of the Divinely ordered process by which a humanity potentially and elementally perfect eventually regains the status which, for educative purposes, it has temporarily lost.¹ And in the case of a Christ in whom the whole complex nature has been com-

¹ We adopt this form of expression as consistent with the "redemption" idea. As a matter of fact, there can be no "loss" from the heavenly point of view; in the Eternal Mind and Counsels all *is* as it ever was or will be. But the Eternal Thought, though essentially complete, seeks expression on the manifested plane, and the expression, when in process, is an imperfect representation of the true being of the thing expressed. In other words, the race has not yet *become* what it *is* in the Divine Thought. But it is predestined to do so; and when the image (*εἰκών*) has become a perfect representation of the Original, man will have "regained" his "lost" self-knowledge. The terms "loss," "restoration," "education," and the like apply only to the evolutionary process of the manifested plane; they are inapplicable to man in his essential nature.

pletely atoned, the expression of this truth holds good even to the outward details of the physical plane ; even the very manner of His death may have had a significance which was Cosmic. For those, however, to whom a symbol is a dead and valueless superstition, or at best a poetic analogy, the consideration of the mystic correspondence which exists between every aspect of the Perfected Man—body, soul, and spirit—will have but small significance ; yet it is the possible clue to many obscure expressions of the Initiate Apostle in which he illustrates the mystic ἀπολύτρωσις in terms of the physical plane. It seems to be true in degree of all spiritual men, but supremely true of the highest, that where the body is so utterly attuned to the Spirit as to become its meet and perfect symbol, the outer events of such a life will shape themselves in strict obedience to the movement of the inner self of which they are the outward and visible signs. Thus the Christ-history is literally an externalisation of the Christ-spirit, its transcription on the world-pages in terms of suffering, renunciation, love, and triumph. With our dim and inadequate conceptions of the nature of the Christ-condition, and our ignorance of the connection between body and spirit ; with no true science of the correspondence, or vital relation, between the expressions of life on the various planes of being, we are totally

unprepared to deny on the one hand, or on the other to dogmatise upon, certain suggestions which we find in the Epistles as to the *necessity* of symbolic happenings on the physical plane. We know not how events in Time may vitally correspond with truths that are out of Time. And until that knowledge is in some measure ours, by the growth of the spiritual intuition which feels, even though it cannot define, the oneness of life on all planes of being, the last word on the "Jesus aspect" of the ἀπολύτρωσις has yet to be said.

II. Καταλλαγή (reconciliation). "Through whom we have received the at-one-ment."¹

The only passage in which this much-abused word is found yields, when carefully examined, the contrary of the usually received interpretation. According to the exoteric reading of these famous verses, the death of Jesus is the Atonement, or Propitiation, offered to the Eternal Father in appeasement of an otherwise unappeasable justice. To make amends for a world gone wrong, the Eternal Son condescends to a malefactor's death, which He presents as a satisfaction to injured Holiness. But the verses in question say just otherwise. The Atonement is not offered by Jesus to God, but through Jesus to us, and it is offered as an expression of the love, and not of the wrath, of Him who

¹ Rom. v. 8-11.

thus "commendeth His love to us."¹ Even if we treat these words on the simple, historical plane, the plane of popular theology, the Atonement cannot be other than a hand of reconciliation stretched out from Heaven to earth, a cord of love drawing the self-turned heart of man back from his long estrangement to the Father-Heart whence he came forth. But it is on the philosophic plane that the *καταλλαγή*, or reconciliation, receives its truest explanation. The death of Jesus is, as we have said, the symbol—and an historic happening may be the finest of all symbols—of those darkest and lowest moments of the finite which are necessary elements in a universe that is based on Contraries. To repeat the text of our treatise, the profound Hegelian idea which we have seen to be so fully anticipated in the Epistles, God is not God without the state of self-manifestation *which includes the contrasts necessary to give form and determination to Being*. Therefore the Supreme becomes explicit in the contraries of finite experience—evil, separation, enmity, and death,—that in the close embrace of opposites, the meeting of utter extremes, the finite may be transcended and the Infinite self-expressed.

Theology presents the Calvary mystery mainly from the side of man ; mystic philosophy presents it also from the side of God. The Supreme Sacri-

¹ Rom. v. 8.

fice has its roots in the very essentials of things ; God's suffering is also God's need (*Gottes Noth*). To evolve a universe, that He may realise Himself both as Knower and as Lover, He must needs become finite, that His universe may become infinite. The greater—nay, the greatest—not only includes, but *implies* the least. Now the history of Jesus, in that He was the expression of the Cosmic life, is the history of the God-process, the world-process, writ small. The Passion represented the moment of finitude in God acted out in terms of personality, and is, in the most far-reaching sense, a symbol of the Mystery which is the pivot of the whole cycle of Being—God stooping in man to the lowest that He may return into Himself, in fulness of self-realisation, “bearing His sheaves with Him.” In the isolation of Gethsemane Jesus touched, as it were, in His own representative consciousness, that furthest moment of separation experienced by the race as a whole : what man was, He was ; what man suffered, He suffered by a voluntary identification with limitations which only He could assume who had first transcended them.

In thus associating together the lowest and highest extremes of Being in one manifestation, Christianity sounds what is probably a unique message. God, the infinite, is man the finite ;

life is through death ; spirit the more spiritual by contact with matter. Thus contrasts which seem to cancel one another are in truth mutually inclusive, and necessary to the perfect self-expression of Him who yet transcends even His own need for self-expression, and is in reality untouched by the opposites even when in association therewith.

“The death of Jesus,” says Hegel, “is love itself, expressed as a moment of God, and it is this death which brings about reconciliation. In it we have a picture of absolute love. It is the identity of the Divine and human ; it implies that in the finite God is at home with Himself, and this finite, as seen in death, is itself determination belonging to God. God has through death reconciled the world, and reconciled it eternally with Himself. This coming back from the state of estrangement is His return to Himself, and it is because of it that He is Spirit ; and the third point accordingly is that Christ is risen. Negation is consequently surmounted, and the negation of the negation is thus a moment of the Divine nature.”¹

Now this view of the *καταλλαγή* or reconciliation, the At-one-ment, as it is popularly called, is connected with a vital truth. The Supreme stoops to the lowest levels of the finite *only that He may transcend them* ; the finite, in short, *is the moment of*

¹ *Philosophy of Religion*, iii. 96.

return, the darkest moment ere the rising of the Spiritual Sun. Christ, therefore, in symbolically "becoming" separation, enmity, and sin, in so doing symbolically wipes them out for ever. He is "placarded up,"¹ crucified as a proclamation to man that the union of the opposites has fruit in life eternal. In living out His symbolic life to the uttermost depths of sacrifice ; in literally drawing into Himself the sin-side of humanity, and those elements of separation and otherness which make the very essence of the finite, He proclaimed in His person the great philosophic fact that in God these things were done away, the Infinite having condescended to the finite only that He might lift it into the fulness of His own transcendence.

This, then, is one aspect of the mystic *καταλλαγή*, or reconciliation,—the union of the separated, the "drawing nigh of them that were far off,"—and it has little in common with the popular notion of satisfaction offered by a God-victim to Himself for the sins of a race which Divine justice forbade Him to pardon on any other terms. Historic Calvary did not alter the permanent attitude of God to man ; it proclaimed through a great human Symbol that already in God the sores of humanity were healed ; the finite had come home again to the heart of the Infinite ; the self-centred will was

¹ Προεγράφη, Gal. iii. 1.

yielded to the one and only Will ; God and man were reconciled.

We must endeavour to avoid a misconception here. The Christ proclaimed these things as facts on the Divine, the Timeless plane, the plane of the Mind of God, wherein the "Fall" must always exist simultaneously with the "Restoration," there being in the consciousness of God no separation into divided opposites, *since each antithesis is at once in opposition and at once resolved*. But on the manifested, or temporal plane, the essential has yet to become actual, the Will of God to be fulfilled "as in Heaven, so on earth." Of this fulfilment the *καταλλαγή* accomplished by Christ is the certain prophecy ; by it we are assured that in Time, Eternity *shall* be realised, and the truths of Heaven reflected and expressed in a reconciled and perfected Earth. It is only on the Time-plane that we can speak of *καταλλαγή*, which is the process of making real "below" what is ever essentially real "above." Calvary, as it was understood by St Paul, proclaimed in Time an Eternal fact, and by that proclamation opened up for all who could receive it a new kind of attitude towards themselves and the Divine. Henceforth the Christian knew in himself what God had always known of and for him, that he was not an enemy but a son, though the exigencies of the Time-plane prevented the full

vision of all that term implies. So Calvary could not alter the race's standing in God, but it could and did proclaim what had been essentially true for man since man first was.

And if the *καταλλαγή* is still as yet but dimly visible in human lives, if wills are still self-turned and hearts still obdurate, we know that "above" it is not so, for the Christ announced in a symbolic life the essential perfection of the race in God. Truly, then, may the Apostle urge on his converts a practical realisation of this pristine truth : "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."¹

This is the At-one-ment from the Cosmic aspect ; it has others which are more personal and interior. In one sense the *καταλλαγή* is a continuous process of at-one-ing the conflicting natures in man. It is a state of spiritual equilibrium. He who is truly at-oned has gained his right poise within ; he may safely tread the razor-edge of the "small old path" that leads to eternal life, for he has found the centre of gravity. To borrow the words of the felicitous phrase in which St Paul describes the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile in Christ, the man who is truly "reconciled" has "made in himself of the twain

¹ Rom. vi. 11.

(natures) one New Man, so making peace, that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby.”¹ The Cross may here stand esoterically for the union of the opposites in the Perfect Man, he who unites in absolute balance qualities which in the present order of things exist out of balance. Such an one is Christ, in whom flesh and Spirit, law and Gospel, Jew and Gentile, bond and free, are metaphorically brought into perfect equilibrium. In man Christ is being formed, and in Jesus, the specimen of the *καταλλαγή* in full operation and perfection, He prophesies the distant yet certain hour when the At-onement will be also accomplished in each member of the race. In short, the Gospel of the *καταλλαγή* is also the Gospel of the *δικαιοσύνη*, the “Rightness of God,” of which we shall speak more fully in our concluding chapter.

III. The third element in the consideration of the meaning and significance of the death of Jesus is that of propitiation. Between *ἱλαστήριον*, propitiation, and *ἀπολύτρωσις*, the price of redemption, there is no important distinction, and the suggestions we have already offered with regard to the latter term will apply equally well to the former. But the true inwardness of the propitiatory idea, as we find it set forth in the Epistles, is to be sought in

¹ Eph. ii. 15.

the peculiar symbolism from which it was derived. When the Apostle states, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood,"¹ he uses a word of which one interpretation is the Mercy-Seat. The term is not *ἰλασμός* as in 1 John ii. 2, which conveys the idea of a sacrifice, or means of appeasing; but *ἰλαστήριον*, or the mystic place of union in the ancient Jewish ritual, at which Shekinah and priest were for the moment at-one-d. The sense of the phrase might be re-stated thus: "Who is God's proclamation to the world of the perfect at-one-ment of Heaven and earth, God and man." Here again we have a hint of the resolution of the opposites in a Higher Unity, the New Creation, the Perfect Man. That this was one of the hidden meanings of the Mercy-Seat becomes, as we think, apparent on an examination of the ritual to which the word *ἰλαστήριον* has reference. St Paul, we must again observe, beheld the Master with spiritual vision transmitted through Jewish metaphor—which metaphor later theologians, more Jewish than he, have accepted as expressions of literal fact. Nothing could be more foreign to the Apostle's method, however, than hard-and-fast statements, and exact definitions. Dogmatist and logician though he was, the terms of his theses are left always undefined. Hence his words have be-

¹ Rom. iii. 25.

come, from their very looseness, the battle-ground of almost unparalleled disputations. In short, the Orientalism of St Paul had taught him the value, but possibly not the danger, of metaphor. The word under consideration is a case in point. Here the writer has in mind the great Jewish symbolism in which he had been carefully and philosophically educated, and of which the end and meaning would certainly have been more or less fully known to him. What, then, was that end and meaning?

All religions foreshadow with greater or less suggestiveness the ultimate of things; for this purpose came they forth. Their end is the knowledge of God, and therefore of man who is the mirror of God. The mysteries of all religious symbolism that is philosophically based will therefore open to a subjective key. Man, the secret of the ages, in his true relationship to God the Unseen, has been the hidden *motif* of ritual, symbol, sacrifice, sacrament, and dogma since religions were first given as self-disclosing mirrors to man. Man as man is capable of ultimate and realised union with God. In him the Divine Mystery which is his very self will eventually come to full and undisputed possession. He will become literally the vehicle and image of God by the offering of the human, separated, personal will and selfhood which is all that most men know of themselves. This being

his end, it is the keystone of the religions whose mission is to assist him to that end. Now the intuitive and philosophic mind of Paul had received, by contact with the Gnosis of his time, the clue to that great ritual system of the Jewish Church in which the Gnosis was foreshadowed and concealed. And the culmination of that ritual, its most solemn and most comprehensive act, was the yearly approach to the hidden Mercy-Seat by the representative of the people on the great day of atonement. At this sacred spot within the Temple's uttermost seclusion, the Shekinah was wont to meet the representative of the people, who, bearing in his heart as an offering the national will, and in his hand the blood of the sacrificial victim, made the great symbolic surrender by which priest and Deity were enabled to meet in a mystic at-one-ment, and sins were cancelled by the putting away of the only condition by which sin is rendered possible.

This striking and awful event was instituted to foreshadow in a single dramatic act the mighty truth of man's ultimate union with the Shekinah of his innermost being. Though the full mystery was not perhaps disclosed to the people, its objective representation was set forth, year by year, as the central, crowning solemnity of the national worship. Those who, like St Paul, were masters

in Israel knew its import. They knew, too, that the components of the symbolic act were literally those of the thing signified. There were, in other words, the condition and the result ; renunciation and union. The condition on which the hidden glory was revealed in a definite place and mode, was the deliberate offering by the people, in a chosen representative, of the sin-nature, or lower self-will, averted from God ; with the result that in a symbolic act of sacrifice the one and only bar to the presence of the Shekinah was removed. This drama further demanded an *expression*, in an animal victim, of the inner sacrifice of a yielded will ; it was required as an outward and visible sign that the true sacrifice had been offered, but was not in the eyes of God *the sacrifice itself*. “ For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and of goats could take away sin.”¹ The efficacy, indeed, of all blood offerings lay in their being *signs* of an offered life, and where this was absent, the sacrament failed of its purpose. Hence the yearly repetition of what was necessarily a fugitive attitude of heart. This truth only the more enlightened of the prophets saw and proclaimed ; it was hardly, indeed, to be expected that a people whose spiritual condition so imperatively demanded a religion of signs, could rise far above the region of the

¹ Heb. x. 4.

outward and visible into a full realisation of what the outward and visible was intended to convey. But the Apostle, and his disciple, the probable writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, knew the real place of the victim in an act of propitiation. The true offering was the yielded will, of which the outpoured physical life was the ultimate expression and guarantee. "Wherefore when he cometh into the world he saith, Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt-offerings for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst thou pleasure therein. Then hath he said, Lo, I come to do thy will. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. In which will we have been sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."¹

Translate this archaic passage into terms of mystic thought. We see applied to the Master, as outer representative of the Christ-state, the three elements in the striking drama by which that state was symbolised. He is alike the High Priest by whom the offering is made; the *ἱλαστήριον*, or meeting-point at which the Shekinah enfolds with Its effulgence the waiting people in their representative; and the *ἱλασμός*, or ransoming sacrifice, which is the *outward sign* of the great interior sacrifice of will, and heart, and life. These

¹ Heb. x. 5-10.

elements being intrinsic parts of the Christ-condition, each and all may be applied in fitting metaphor to Him in whom that condition was expressed and epitomised. Thus the Christ offers in His universal consciousness the will of the whole race to God, and so is "Priest for ever." He is the Perfect Man in whom Heaven and earth meet in mystic harmony (the *ἱλαστήριον*, or Mercy-Seat). His offered life was the symbolic expression of the great Cosmic Offering, on the one hand, and of the complete renunciation of His own individual will, on the other. He is thus *ἱλασμός*, the sacrifice. And what He is the world has also to be, for the Christ-state is the race's objective.

It is clear, then, that the offering of Jesus on the physical Cross was but the ultimate expression and symbol of an offering that began with His entrance into the Adam state. It proceeded to the lowest physical extreme, because, in a will so utterly yielded, the worst that man could do became the sacrament of perfect and final self-abandonment. And He being cosmic, and the representative of the future corporate consciousness of the race, in Him all human wills were potentially offered, not as an act of appeasement, but as a condition of union with God.

CHAPTER XI

LAW AND WORKS. (PARTICULAR.)

THE twin states of Sin and Death, which we have just considered from the abstract and universal standpoint, have their correspondence on the plane of the particular in the Apostolic antithesis, Law and Works. These opposites represent the efforts of the natural man to attain a spiritual goal by methods of the natural or *ἀμαρτία* level ; we find them, therefore, obeying the laws, and displaying the characteristics of that level. Even when raised to their highest possibility, Law and Works can accomplish little beyond making real to the soul the existence of the sin-state ; they cannot deliver him from its bondage. On the contrary, the soul which seeks liberation by legal methods finds itself bound by the very fetters from which it was promised release. Law and Works are exclusively of the natural order, and are therefore powerless to further a spiritual condition for which they have no essential affinity. For this reason the

spiritual teacher is wise in discounting them as agents in the development of the New Man.

Nevertheless, the natural man and his methods are not to be condemned *per se*. The Adam state, of which sin is the gross extreme, has a definite place in the scheme of evolution, and will continue to serve as the nursery of souls for many a further turn of the Cosmic Wheel. Similarly, Law and Works, being of the natural or Adam level, have very obvious and undeniable uses. That they should form part of the training of every individual who has reached a certain stage in progress, is as inevitable as that he who is a child should receive the education of a child, and it is only the soul with manhood close in view who can afford to cast them aside. In fact, they are never discarded, save as they are taken into a higher condition which fulfils and completes them.

St Paul indicates the uses of νόμος (Law) in some very suggestive phrases. Throughout the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians νόμος is used chiefly in relation to the Law of Moses, but the Apostle's attitude towards the Mosaic code will apply to the outcome of the legalising tendency everywhere—the tendency that binds thought to syllogisms, actions to the fruit of action, religion to authority, and the free Spirit to Sinaitic prohibitions. The Jewish Dispensation stands to St Paul as a symbol

of the great preparatory stage of the soul in which it is schooled for the coming of the New Man in the heart. "The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ."¹ "First that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual."² "If there had been a law which could make alive, verily rightness would have been by the law. Howbeit the Scripture hath shut up all things under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."³

In short, the legalising faculty in man, notwithstanding the nature of its level, is the forerunner, preparing the way of the Lord, making His paths straight. By imposing external checks on the vagaries of the lower will, it furthers the coming of the day when the Higher Will shall arise and assert its own. Impotent of any life-giving qualities, it may yet break up the fallow ground, and render possible the sowing, though it be not itself the seed. In other words, what the ploughman is to the harvest, law and works—the manifestation of the Spirit on the Adam level—may be to the operations of the Spirit on the Christ level.

Law has yet another faculty. It precipitates, or brings to the surface, and so prepares to get rid of, the otherwise unrevealed animalism of the lower nature. "But sin, that it might be shown

¹ Gal. iii. 24.² 1 Cor. xv. 46.³ Gal. iii. 21, 22, and *seq.*

to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good, that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful.”¹ “By law is the knowledge of sin.”² “I had not known sin except through the law.”³ “And I was alive apart from law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.”⁴ “Sin finding occasion by the commandment beguiled me, and through it slew me ; so that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, righteous, and good.”⁵

It is not difficult to sense the subtle force of the “so that.” Law in the form of external prohibition, breathing threatenings and slaughter, moves the sluggish waters of the moral life by first revealing to the soul its power of sinning. And an experimental knowledge of sin is the necessary preliminary of an experimental knowledge of righteousness. Therefore Law and Gospel, though planes apart as to nature and method, are yet in ultimate analysis a pair of Divine complements. Law is destructive, revealing discord by prohibitive mandates—“Thou shalt not” ; Gospel, on the other hand, is constructive, and the two or three “Thou shalts” which compose its moral code are prophecies of perfection, the future tense of distant though certain attainment. Law, apart

¹ Rom. vii. 13.

² Rom. iii. 20.

³ Rom. vii. 7.

⁴ Rom. vii. 9.

⁵ Rom. vii. 11, 12.

from its great function as a revealer of *ἀμαρτία*, is powerless to remedy the condition it was designed to condemn. It can never of itself justify, because it is the expression of limitation, and the really justified man is he whom no limitation can any longer bind. The most faithful legalist is always in bondage to obligations which are not discharged by performance. Laws, systems, and codes, when regarded other than as temporary means to an end, do but perpetuate the condition of *ἀμαρτία* by continually pointing to a goal not yet attained. The legalist may hit his tree only to find that the sky still looms untouched. It is of little consequence, therefore, to the man of works that his life is free from outer acts of disharmony; the ban of *ἀμαρτία* is over his highest efforts if by way of Law he hopes eventually to reach to the state beyond Law.

The exact scope and nature of Law and Works will be more easily understood if we contrast them with their natural antithesis, Gospel and Faith. It is necessary to emphasise the point so often alluded to, that the two sides of the antithesis have reference to two distinct levels of nature. Law is the expression of the Old Man, the child of the bond-servant, seeking freedom by methods of the natural, or Adam level. Faith, on the other hand, is a spiritual activity, conducting to purely spiritual

ends. Law is the substance (*ὑπόστασις*) — that which “stands under” — of things seen ; faith the substance of things hoped for, unseen, eternal. Both the seen and the unseen aspects of things are conditioned by the laws of their specific planes ; when we speak of Law as the *ὑπόστασις*, or foundation, of the temporal order, we do not assume an absence of law in the eternal order. The spiritual plane, too, will have its governing and determining principle, described somewhat paradoxically by the Apostle as a “law of faith”¹ ; the “law of God after the inward man”² ; the “law of the members warring against the law of the mind.”³ He also indicates in a beautiful passage that there may be a slavery to Divine law which is “more than liberty” : “now being made free from sin, and bond-slaves to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life.”⁴ “Being made free from sins, ye became bond-slaves to rightness.”⁵

Throughout the Epistles, however, the term “law,” when it does not obviously apply to the law of Moses, is generally used in the sense of the fundamental principle and characteristic of the temporal universe, and of the natural man still in *ἀμαρτία*. To this point of view we will restrict

¹ Rom. iii. 27.

² Rom. vii. 22.

³ Rom. vii. 23.

⁴ Rom. vi. 22.

⁵ Rom. vi. 18.

ourselves. The Adam law is inert, tending to fixity, compelling from without. Its characteristic, when applied to the moral life, is self. To have, to be, to attain something for the soul's benefit, these are the taskmasters goading works to their fruition. The legalist regards virtue in the light of a personal asset ; he may even go to the length of losing his life in this world—but only that he may find it unto life eternal. For him the one purpose of the moral life is to enlarge the borders of self ; he cultivates the virtues not from pure love of virtue, but because virtue is a desirable possession. But the man who seeks salvation by this, the earthly method, pursues a course which by its very nature is foredoomed to failure. He is never really virtuous, since virtue is from first to last an unconscious growth that asks as its one great condition the abandonment of the self that seeks it. Hence salvation, or the attainment of the one true, perfect virtue of a completely yielded will, is “not of works, lest any man should boast,” and to “boast” is at once to accentuate the self, whose only rationale is to be the bond-slave of the spirit. To deck this self in virtue that God and man may love it the more, is the delusive task of many a seeming saint, whose useless toil is in utter ignorance that what he wins is not virtue at all.

It is true that to work for progress for the sake

of what progress will bring to the worker, has its reward in growth of a kind, but for him who so acts there is never the peace of realised attainment. He cannot escape the penalty of actions performed for self-perfection—the ceaseless retreating of the mark which he pursues. In short, there can be no finality to works, for no man was ever yet satisfied with his own aggrandisement, least of all with the conquests of the spirit.

We may look at the subject from another point of view. Law and Works reveal themselves, even on the moral plane, as the automatic adjustment of action and reaction between related parts in a whole ; they are under a mechanical necessity as inexorable as that which builds the universe of the physical investigator, who learns to control law in order that it may not eventually control him. At the same time, we may not deny that the legalist's view-point has a measure of truth and usefulness. Law in the sense of a certain immutability of principle hidden deep in the being of things is the secret of there being things at all ; a stable universe must be obedient to certain antecedent principles which determine, and thereby make possible, its existence as Cosmos in contradistinction to Chaos. The strict development of effects from causes ; the equal and opposite balance of opposing forces—yes, the “eye for an eye” of the natural vengeance

that "knows nor wrath nor pardon,"—these things are stubborn facts in a world that is not founded on sentimentality. No one who has ever come up against the inflexibility of law can talk lightly of the experience. He will have learned something of what St Paul terms the "terror of the Lord" (*φόβος*, a term signifying something to flee from, and so to avoid),—that the universe is not his in its entirety, but has its hurtful side, which he approaches at his peril.

Again, he is taught the extent of the claims he may make upon Nature. "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you again" may be strictly commercial, but it is strictly just. Evil for evil, good for good, much for much, little for little—such is the unfaltering echo of Nature to the demands of men. It is a glorious principle; on what other, indeed, can a universe be planned? But if left at this point it is insufficient. The law that establishes a ceaseless self-reproductive round of cause moving to effect, and effect in turn becoming cause, leads us no-whither; we are on a treadmill from which there is seemingly no escape save a leap off into space.

Such is the legalist's position—that of action and reaction applied to the sphere of morals. Well, indeed, may the Apostle exclaim: "If there was a law that could give life, verily rightness should be

by the law.” His reference to the legalising principle, generally in terms of the Mosaic code, does not militate against the wider aspect we have given to the term νόμος, for Mosaism was this principle in manifestation ; it represented mechanical necessity on the plane of the moral life. More than this, too : the old Dispensation stood for external authority as opposed to the guidance of the indwelling Spirit. The moral law, to a devout Jew, was an imposition which he disobeyed at his peril, rather than the fruit of a life-giving spirit whose first manifestation is in the region of a yielded will. The Apostle’s Gospel, on the other hand, was the rule of the New Man in prepared hearts. He had something higher to offer than a legalism that controlled the spirit from without ; his aim was to awaken a principle of life whose effect was not to subjugate, but to regenerate. The *καινὴ κτίσις* (New Creation) was not, and could never be, the product of the legalising principle in any of its manifestations. To have life, and to have it more abundantly, was the ideal of the Pauline disciple, whose “mortal body” was literally given over to be filled by the renewing forces of his unseen Master. “And we who live are alway delivered unto death, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal bodies.”¹ The highest refinement of the

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 11.

systematising principle was incapable of results on the plane of life.

Still, the Apostle was no Antinomian. His great definition of the Gospel as the "Rightness of God" points to the recognition of a fundamental, ideal Justice which can never be fully expressed in terms of action and reaction, whether on the physical or the moral plane. It is the principle which Philo and the old mystics termed the right hand of the Logos, the co-equal Executor of His decrees, the mode of His working in the lower worlds. It regulates, controls, and adjusts the complex processes of the universe, making explicit all that in the Logos is implicit. It is at the inner springs of evolution, "fetching secrets forth," guiding the movements of the inner world, and establishing their impress on the outer. Its heart is intelligence; its process the moving of intelligence to the highest ends of the world and the individual. Law, in its deepest and most philosophical aspect, is co-extensive with the universe, for it is the agent by which things come to be. It is God in action: therefore by no one name or characteristic may it be defined. It is not balance alone, though it is that; it is not retribution alone, though strict retribution is among its methods of working. It is not rectitude alone, nor the rigid adjustment of sequences, though both these elements fall within

it. The judicial aspect of Law which was the Jewish aspect almost exclusively, is but a partial statement of all that is involved in that perfect Law of Justice on which the worlds are built, by which they are evolved, and apart from which they have no sustaining purpose. It is the Pauline *δικαιοσύνη*, which has for one of its aspects love (*ἀγάπη*), the harmonising force that holds the universe firmly in an ideal, Divine purpose; and "wrath" (*ὀργή*), which is love on its constraining side, the inflexible resister of all that makes against the ultimate destiny of the world. Rightness is a grand generalisation of all these aspects, for it is the one inclusive law of laws beyond which there is, and can be, no other.

CHAPTER XII

LIFE : GRACE : RESURRECTION

IN a previous chapter we have examined the teaching of the Apostle concerning the sin of "Adam," and have suggested the particular view of that transgression which would probably have found favour with one of his school of thought. This study will have helped to reveal, by inference and contrast, that triple crown of the Apostle's message—Life, Grace, and Resurrection—which represents the state of the New Creation, and we have now to set forth explicitly the main conditions of which this new state is to consist. Let us glance briefly first of all at those which it is destined to supersede.

Man, we have seen, is not yet living his true and essential life. From one point of view he is an embryo in the womb of the Eternal Mother, from which standpoint "it doth not yet appear what he shall be."¹ From another point of view he has been made "for a little while lower than

¹ 1 John iii. 2.

Divine, that he may be crowned with glory and honour.”¹ His descent, or “fall” into the bondage of a sense-nature may have been, and indeed is, a *reculer pour mieux sauter* ; nevertheless, he has lost much of the angel nature in the process of acquiring the human. St Paul describes his present condition in a word : it is death. The Heaven in and for which he was created does not exist for his natural consciousness, which is closed to the higher world of Spirit, and open only to the lower world of sense ; in other words, he is “dead while he liveth.”

Man is not only dead to the infinite stretches of a spiritual environment ; he is also in bondage to that segment of the environment with which he is able to correspond. It has come about that the loss of rapport with the spiritual arc of his being has attached him the more closely to its material counterpart. He has forgotten that he is “a son of kings,” and remembers only “the slavery he serveth.” But the promise of the Gospel is the complete reversal of this condition. He who is truly “alive in Christ,” he who habitually exhales the Elixir at its fountain-head, is in bondage to nothing on the plane of sense. His only bondage, which is at the same time the source of his truest freedom, is a willing slavery to the things of the

¹ Ps. viii. 5 (R.V.).

Spirit. Of all the lower elements in his experience, he has the promise of being eventually "more than conqueror."¹ Hence the life of the Spirit is first and foremost a triumphant life. It is further a life of unending expansion. It means the opening of the Heavenly Environment. The Gospel puts a man into correspondence with that with which he was formerly out of correspondence. It is a unifying impulse from the heart of God Himself, imparting rightness, holiness, wholeness, in place of the disharmony that reigned in the region of a conflicting will. It helps to polarise the will to God, so restoring the pristine harmony which was lost when the race sought independent, self-centred existence. By destroying separateness it restores the vast reaches of the Spiritual Environment which cannot exist for a soul which is out of the unity.

The spiritual life is further a life of continuous uprising. The natural man pursues a course whose end, if unchecked, is strictly the obscuration of the spirit within him. It may be likened to the centrifugal path of the wandering star that will retreat from the centre of attraction into the "blackness of darkness for ever," unless the opposite, the centripetal, force divert its natural and inevitable doom. But the path of the Spirit is contrary to that of the natural or carnal life, whose trend is

¹ Rom. viii. 37 ; 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.

towards the darkness of non-being ; it is the path of the Return to heights which dwarf our puny measures, and beggar our poor imaginings ; and its fruits are freedom, life, grace, joy, triumph, fulness. But because it is the path of the Return, it depends upon, and is the presupposition of, the path of the Forthgoing. In Rom. v. 12-21, in which "death" in the "Adam" is directly opposed to life in the Christ, St Paul seeks to display the two complementary arcs of the cycle of human evolution. By sharply contrasting the natural and the spiritual creations, he proclaims the "Adam" of flesh to be absolutely essential to, and the implication of, the "Adam" of spirit ; hence the death of the race in the natural state is the necessary precursor of its resurrection in the Christ-state. There is no Restoration where there is no Fall, no New Man without first the Old Adam.

Two considerations of importance arise out of this antithetical method of the Apostle. The first, that the balance of opposites is the law of life in the spiritual as in the natural world ; and the second, that a higher state invariably emerges from one of deep contrast. The points of view implied in these propositions are slightly different ; we will therefore examine them separately and in detail.

I. Life and grace are states of spiritual equipoise. We shall simplify this consideration, which may

not appear self-evident, by first showing the truth of the statement as applied to life on the physical plane. "Life," says Mr Herbert Spencer, "is the continuous adjustment of external relations to internal relations."¹ And conversely: "Death from disease arises either when the organism is congenitally defective in its power to balance ordinary external actions, or when there has taken place some unusual external action to which there was no answering internal action. Death by accident implies some neighbouring mechanical changes of which the causes are either unnoticed from inattention, or are so intricate that their results cannot be foreseen, and consequently certain relations in the organism are not adjusted to the relations in the environment."²

In this plain biological definition both of life and the absence of life, we have two factors and their relation, two opposites and their union. The factors, the opposites, are a set of complex internal relations termed organism, and a series of external relations termed environment. And life in the physical, no less than in the moral and spiritual realms is the "Rightness of God," which comes about only when an equipoise is maintained between these essential contrasts. There is, indeed, no element in the phenomenon of life—whether

¹ *Principles of Biology*, vol. i. p. 74.

² *Op.* at pp. 88, 89.

it be the element of growth, assimilation, reproduction, or decay—which is not the result of some measure of interactions between internal relations and external relations. We have therefore to exclude from our conception of life the idea of its being a kind of independent entity that plays the part of efficient cause of vital phenomena. Life is only another name for a series of adjustments, operations, or relations between organism and environment. It consists wholly and solely in the *coming into right relations* of two essentially contrasted things. A piece of living protoplasm is so constructed that it will interact with environment in a particular manner and degree ; in other words, that it will establish true relations with external forces. And the fact that it is capable by its essential nature of this balance of contraries, distinguishes it from inorganic matter which has not this capacity. The inherent *tendency* to relate itself truly to environment constitutes the potential life of the plasm, and is just “the little fact that makes the difference” between the kingdom of the living and the kingdom of the “non-living.” To slightly adapt one of Mr Herbert Spencer’s illustrations : physical life is maintained when the relations between assimilation, oxidation, and genesis of force going on in the organism continue to be adjusted with the relations between oxygen and

food, and absorption of heat by the environment. An organism is alive in exact proportion to the nicety of the balance between inner processes and outer stimuli. Action from the side of the external opposite must be met by response on the part of the internal opposite ; from which we note that mere contact between two opposite factors, though one of the conditions of life, is not the vital condition. *Union* is the essential of life, and contact is not union. An organism may lack vitality, and yet be in perfect *contact* with environment. What is lacking is the subtle adjustment, the *union* of the opposites which is life. The precise nature of this union is beyond detection by the lenses of science ; in watching food transmuted into blood, for example, it is only observing the superficial side of the mystery of assimilation. It does not yet know the true inwardness either of organism or environment ; therefore it can know little that is really vital concerning the result of the marriage of the twain. All that may safely be asserted by science is the valuable generalisation that adjustment between opposites is the great law of life.

Let us now observe how, in Rom. v. 12-21, St Paul applies this principle to the realm of the Spiritual Man. In the "Adam" transgression, however that term may be interpreted, humanity died. Some process of development away from

the Central Unity inhibited the spiritual faculties with which the race was originally endowed. But there is a Divine Opposite to this state of "trespass," which so adjusts itself to the contrary element in the antithesis that life ensues where there was formerly death. The Apostle places this Divine principle, which is his great proclamation to humanity, in immediate opposition to the "trespass of the one" (Rom. v. 15), and gives it a sweet and untranslatable name, χάρις θεοῦ, the "grace of God." Grace is sin's delectable contrast, the healing, unifying principle in a world wherein separateness and the forces of disruption threaten to gain the upper hand, and its loveliness and sufficiency far outbalance the worst that sin can do. "Where sin abounds, grace doth abound yet more exceedingly" (Rom. v. 20). "For if by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one, *much more* shall they that receive the abundance of grace reign in life through one" (Rom. v. 17).

St Paul is speaking, in the passage under consideration,¹ of a special world-manifestation of this principle at a definite crisis in human history, and of a magnitude proportioned to the condition it is to supersede. But the laws of "grace," whether special or universal, are ever the same. Grace is the dynamic of the New Man in the heart,

¹ Rom. v. 12-21.

and appears whenever He asserts Himself over the deathward tendencies of the lower nature. Grace is the outcome of the establishment of right relations between the "internal relations" of the spiritual self, and the "external relations" of the material self. It also brings these relations about. The product of the balance of contraries, it is the agent, too, by which the balance is established and maintained. Thus it is true not only of grace but of life everywhere, that it is the cause of its own effects, and the effect of its own causes. There was never a moment in the world's history when spiritual life was not always opposing its death-dealing contrary, that principle of separateness and disruption which the Apostle terms *ὀργή*, "wrath."¹ All down the ages, since man was man, the immanent Christ-nature which "died" in and for him at the moment of his "death" into vanity, has, in obedience to the great law of opposites, set itself over against the sin-nature, seeking through adjustment to manifest life. It thus becomes clear that grace, this fairest expression of the Divine immanence, cannot have scope or play where there is no sin to give it a *raison d'être*. Life in the spiritual as in the physical world is generated by the right relations of two opposites, and the fact that such

¹ See also James i. 19, "The wrath of man worketh not the rightness of God."

right relations are possible completely justifies the existence of that "earthly"¹ member of the pair whose nature is to oppose, and to be opposed by its celestial contrast. "As sin reigned unto death, even so might grace reign *through rightness* unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."² Grace to the Apostle is Rightness. Thus the "Fall" has never been left unprovided for, there having been in man from the first a restless principle of redemption from matter which has ever sought to counteract his imperative demand for association with matter. But this principle has not invariably conquered. The race has been at times in a condition of deadly crisis, when the centrifugal force has threatened, by over-mastery, to destroy the moral balance of the world. At such a time the Cosmic Christ, who has ever moved redeemingly at the heart of all things, has been reinforced by the individual Christ, and a crisis in the universal has been met by a crisis in the particular. It is to such a response that the Apostle refers in the much-disputed passage under consideration.³ The principle of "grace," which is his great antithesis to the death-dealing "Fall," is by means of a particular individuality, Himself "full of grace and truth," who is its especially accredited channel at a great juncture in the world's life. The "Rightness

¹ Cor. xv. 47.² Rom. v. 21.³ Rom. v. 12-21.

of One" acts as a medium of liberation of this Divine principle immanent in all things, yet sharing in the cyclic processes of the mundane order ; and the whole human race has been lifted a stage nearer its assured redemption because a Christ has lived.

Now the terms "Rightness of One," and "Obedience of One," which represent the conditions by which life and grace were to overcome the opposing forces of the natural man, are singularly in harmony with our present line of thought. They signify the Christ-state, which is the state of balance. Rightness is the perfect adjustment of all the contraries that are in conflict in man. Obedience implies the blending into one of two independent wills, and presents us with the now familiar idea of adjustment between two opposite factors, the outcome of which is life. He who has become Christ, the perfectly adjusted One, has in so far forth at-oned and righted the contrary things of the world. He has opposed the mystic sources of evil in man,—“trespass” and “disobedience,” “fall” and separateness,—by their direct opposites, an upstanding life in God, and a will in perfect union with the one and only Will ; and in so doing has brought unto all men for ever the boon of a nearer access to the “rightness which is life.”¹

¹ Rom. v. 18, *δικαίωσιν ζωῆς* (Jowett).

But what we have so far said of life and grace may appear at first sight to militate against its great and peculiar characteristic. It is not a product, but a cause ; not conditioned but free ; not a force to be generated by obedience to law, but a gift to be received at the hands of its Giver and Source. Grace is everything that law and sin are not. And its essential quality is its independence of human means of acquisition. "By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God."¹ "Justified freely by grace."²

We have already indicated the answer to this seeming difficulty. Spiritual truths may be expressed only in and through a paradox. Grace is the eternally free, eternally unbounded gift of God to the soul ; yet even a Divine gift is conditioned by the soul's receptive powers, and those powers again by the grace which determines the limit of the receptivity. Boundless grace and boundless receptivity are never found together, for receptivity is on the plane of the manifest, and is, therefore, limited by the laws of the manifest. In all spiritual problems we must allow for the twofold standpoint, that of the boundless and unmanifest, and its action through the limited and phenomenal. Contradictions arise from confusion of planes.

¹ Eph. ii. 8.

² Rom. iii. 24.

Grace and life, it is true, emerge on the strict fulfilment of conditions, as physical life emerges on the necessary adjustment of internal relations and external relations. But inasmuch as there must be in the organism a *prior tendency* to the physical adjustment of which life is the effect—a tendency that *renders the adjustment possible*—so grace must be antecedent to any of those manifestations of grace which follow on the fulfilment of conditions. Grace, the state of the New Man, is as free, as ungenerable, as essentially Divine as He. Only on the plane of manifestation is it subject to laws. The arena of grace is, in short, the arena of spirit ; and where spirit is absent, there indeed is the limit of grace, but we know not where that limit is to be drawn.

II. But this is not the only paradox in our study. There is another yet more profound, more pregnant with eternal mystery. We have now to consider the principle of life and grace as emerging from the deep contrast of death. *Mors janua vitæ* is no mere figure of speech ; in all the departments of the organic world death will be found to be the condition and accompaniment of life. It is true that life can *originate* only from pre-existent life ; it is equally true that “except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringeth forth much

fruit.”¹ “Thou fool,” exclaims the Apostle, “that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.”² The current exegesis relates these significant sayings to the death of the physical body, in spite of the plain statement that what is sown is a *living* thing, which is to live more abundantly through the instrumentality of dissolution. The grain of wheat has eventually to leave the dark womb of Mother Earth in which the mystic processes of disintegration have been slowly at work ; it has so to adjust its relation to the earthly opposite as eventually to transmute into itself the elements that were once its tomb. It is a life-germ, the forces of which are liberated by the complete destruction of its outer walls. By a subtle union of opposites, the internal relations of vital force in the corn seek a mystic reinforcement from the external relations of soil, moisture, and air, and build out of the combination a stature which is one with, and yet different from, the grain that died, but which could not attain to its fulness as wheat ere it had first died to itself as seed.

Translating this parable into terms of the inner life, the grain of wheat is that share of the Christ-life common to all which has to descend into the grave of the “fallen” or natural state, symbolised in Pauline thought by death, that it may develop in

¹ John xii. 24.

² I Cor. xv. 36.

accordance with the eternal principle of the resistance of opposites, and, in developing itself, transmute also the soil in which it has found entombment. The seed, in other words, is the New Man, but the New Man "abiding alone" in the glory of the supernal worlds brings forth no fruit. His life is essentially the redemptive life, and in order to realise Himself as Redeemer He must have a contrary to redeem. Hence both soil and seed have a mutually necessary part to play in the economy of Creation, and the "reign of sin unto death" is the antecedent condition of the "reign of grace unto life."

When life blends with death in a great overcoming, the result is Resurrection. Resurrection, indeed, is a synonym of life. All true movement is progressive movement, all life that is life indeed is a passing from seed to ripeness. Thus a Gospel such as that of St Paul, which is based on the need of reversing the natural state, finds its *summum bonum* in the fact of resurrection—resurrection, that is, not of dead flesh, but of latent Spirit. The spirit in man sows itself in physical and psychical conditions, but it may not become identified with them beyond the point necessary for a preliminary acquaintance with its opposite. We dare not continue in sin that grace may abound, because grace is a movement *away from* the sin-state; it is the

faith-life of which we shall presently speak, which lifts the natural man upward from the place of his bondage. It follows, then, that resurrection, according to the Apostle in his more spiritual moods, is a spiritual matter dealing not with corpses, but with consciousness. True, the doctrine, in so far as it relates to a final state, is sometimes presented in the Epistles with all the Hebrew colouring of "abrupt catastrophe, and startling and supernatural surprises." The Apostle remembers his Jewish training where the reader would fain he had forgotten it ; he even interrupts the pure mysticism of 1 Cor. xv. 34-57 by utterances so Rabbinical as verses 51, 52. On the other hand, we realise the general spirit of his doctrine to be independent of the materialistic form in which it not seldom took utterance. The innermost feeling of the man was spiritual, idealistic, Gnostic. To arise from the dead was certainly, in the later Epistles, a synonym for the abandonment of the animal consciousness, and the realisation of the Christ-consciousness. It was the great Christian attainment, the final Consummation of that Mystery of Being which the Christ had Himself illustrated in an individual manifestation. Phil. iii. 10-15 gives us an unequivocal statement of the spiritual nature of the doctrine : "That I may know Him (the Christ), and the power of His resurrection, and

the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death, if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already made perfect ; but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which I also was apprehended by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have apprehended ; but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on towards the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."

Again, in Eph. ii. 5, there are strange mystic words which lose meaning if interpreted on the strictly historical plane : "When we were dead through our trespasses, God quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Both these utterances indicate that the true, the mystic Resurrection, is nothing less than attainment of that Goal the missing of which we have seen to be *ἀμαρτία*, or sin. Death, or the dead, is the lower consciousness, limited and distorted by the environment of flesh and matter, a sepulchre indeed to him whose native element is the heart of God. The especial privilege of the Gospel according to Paul

is that this sepulchre need hold the growing spirit no longer. It may still envelop him according to the flesh, but its power is gone : it has been shown for the thing it is by One who has risen therefrom, and so become the First-Fruits of those still asleep in the lower consciousness. The Christ abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. How and what did He abolish ? Not physical death—a boon one would not desire to have abolished,—but that condition of soul-paralysis of which the sting is sin, and whose spurious victory He annulled by revealing to men a vital, secret force within their spirits, the working of which will transform the environment of death into the gate and ally of the new life. The new birth was to be through and by means of the dark womb of the fleshly grave. There was no need to wait for the moment of physical death : the true mystery of the Resurrection, we insist, was independent of the dissolution of the body, and might be attained even in the life which now is ; otherwise the Apostle's words above quoted are void of meaning. In strange confirmation of the old Hermetic definition of the Spirit in man as “that which stood, stands, and will stand,” is the word used by St Paul for that mystic upstanding of the spiritual consciousness, *ἐξανάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν*, or resurrection out of the dead. *Ἀνάστασις* is a standing up.

In the "raised" man the Spirit has acquired poise. He is no longer kept prone by the overmastery of the earthly force ; he stands erect, the earth for his feet, but the lightness of the empyrean for his heart and head.

The true inwardness of the Resurrection must thus be sought in the ultimate perfection of the spiritual consciousness of man. It is of him, and not of his body, that the promise was given : "The dead shall be raised incorruptible." A restoration of the old vivid existence of the body after a dreary half-life in the shadow-world of Sheol was the basis of the Resurrection belief to a pious Jew; Christ took from this belief "its future and remote, in order to give it a present and immediate force and aspect." He lifted the conception from the material to the spiritual plane. "*I am* the Resurrection and the Life"—I, the New Man, immanent in humanity, and revealed in Jesus. When I move in human hearts there is uprising into a fuller, higher consciousness, and the grave of the sin-nature will hold the soul no more.

Before such hope as this, mere survival of life in a new body were a paltry goal indeed. Immortality to be worth striving for must be qualitative, for the Christian who sets his hopes on the great central fact of the Resurrection is indeed pursuing a chimera if that for which he hopes is the mere persistence

of life in some kind of a body hereafter. His doctrine can only be spiritually satisfying if the rising from the dead be shown to consist in the attainment of the height and end of true spiritual being, the life that is life indeed. The reconstruction of his body is a vastly inferior consideration ; the truly " saved " man can make himself at ease as to the question of his vehicle.

But vain indeed must be every attempt to intellectualise in cold words the mysteries that lie at the heart of all spiritual being. Life and grace are the very atmosphere of the spiritual man. In them he lives from moment to moment, drawing unconsciously, it may be, but none the less surely, on an inner reservoir of strength whose Source is inexhaustible, for it is God. St Paul's urgent message to his churches was that they should live in grace as before they had lived in sense. It was now to be their natural element, more real than things temporal, because the element proper to their true self. Just as before they had accepted the world of the natural man as a reality about which there was no doubt, so now they were to " reckon themselves alive " to the spiritual world with which the Gospel had established a new correspondence. It was to become to them an equal fact with the other—nay, the fact of facts. Its powers were theirs for the claiming ; its presence enwrapped them with an

atmosphere of light and grace which their spirits received as instinctively as a flower receives the sunshine, and with effects as life-giving.

They found, too, that the realm of grace was the counterpart of the realm of sense. Hitherto they had lived a half life which was death, a downward-tending life, which contained the seeds of change and decay ; a life which was impotent to check the fierce impetuositities of the natural man ; which was poor, abortive, incomplete, unsatisfying, because it was a life divorced from its complement. Grace was the Eternal Life that flowed into the temporal, and consummated it in a perfect marriage. The Gospel brought together two opposite yet complementary planes, "the Spirit and the Bride," and in so doing declared poor human nature to be only truly human as it was united to the Divine.

Thus the Gospel of St Paul, as of his Master, can be summed up in a word : it is Life. In the hearts of all men resides the secret of the Resurrection, whose symbol and witness to the believer is "newness of life." "Like as Christ was raised up from the dead through the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."² The force of that "even so," I venture to say, has hardly, if ever, been realised in the subsequent

¹ Rom. vi. 4.

history of the Christian Church ; yet its realisation is the supreme lesson in the life of the Elder Brother. The Apostle clearly taught that for the Church, as well as for her Master, was attainable that entire renewal of the spirit which constituted the great antithesis—the New Christ as against the Old Adam. This “New Creation,” moreover, was to be an affair of here and now, transforming the things of the present and the material, the life of the body as well as the life of the spirit. To attain the “anastasis ” or resurrection was to become truly the “upstanding ” man, who fulfilled what had been dimly foreseen at ancient Haran in the vision of the ladder set up on earth, whose top reached unto Heaven. The Resurrection of Jesus was a practical declaration that the “Power that worketh in ” Him supremely, and in us in measure, is Itself Immortal Life, and is eventually irresistible in every son of man in whom It is given free scope, and filial co-operation. St Paul terms It the “Power of the Resurrection,” and the ultimate conquests of that Power in the region of the human spirit will constitute the New Earth and the New Humanity.

CHAPTER XIII

FAITH AND GOSPEL. (PARTICULAR.)

WHEN the Apostle declares that through Faith Law is established, he seems to have in mind the fact that *au fond* Faith and Law are one. The legalising principle of which the Mosaic code was the symbol and expression, is but the surface reflection of the true, unshakable foundation of Law which is really only perceived through the higher insight of Faith. Faith itself is, as we have said, the law or *υπόστασις* of a higher realm of nature. The Gospel is therefore "out of faith, into faith." Of it, by it, through it, and to it are all things that appertain to the level of the New Man. It is the door of the Kingdom of Heaven ; equally is it the sustaining and ruling principle which differentiates a kingdom from a serfdom. The members of that kingdom rule triumphantly by the vital power of Faith : in the Adam state they were goaded by the tyranny of external prohibition. But it is easy to ascertain the relation of Faith to

the spiritual life ; to show what it is in itself is more difficult, for the essentials of the Spirit do not admit of exact definition. We have to look at it from two points of view.

The level of being of which Faith is the law and the substance is essentially the level of life—life at its source, pure, unobstructed, self-reproductive, eternal. “I have come,” says the typical New Man, “that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” Faith, then, in one of its most fundamental aspects, will be a movement of life in the soul, and the men of faith examples of life in its richest and highest developments—men “who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.”¹ “Have the faith of God,” exclaims Jesus. “That He might be just, and the justifier of him that hath the faith of Jesus,”² says the Apostle. But in what sense are we to understand the “faith of God,” the “faith of Jesus” ? The Lord’s own symbol of faith³ suggests an answer. “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed (has faith), ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place,

¹ Heb. xi. 33, 34.

² Rom. iii. 26.

³ Matt. xvii. 20.

and it shall remove ; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." The mustard-seed is an illustration of the miracle of greatness existing in an infinitesimal germ, "the least of all seeds." But the seed was chosen as a symbol of faith, not because it was small, but because it was living. Though minute as to size, it was mighty as to vital content, a germ of life in which future greatness was already hid. So the "faith" of the mustard-seed is the mustard tree within it, working slowly outward and upward into visibility and fulness ; similarly, the "faith of God," the "faith of Jesus," is the Christ-stature within the soul which ceaselessly moves towards its own fulfilment.

The Apostle also uses a figure drawn from vital processes to illustrate his great doctrine of Justification apart from works of law. The "faith of our father Abraham"¹ serves as a fine symbol of this same mystic principle of life that revivifies even the dead womb of the Adam nature. For in what did the faith of Abraham consist ? In his belief in a promise ? It was that, but it was more ; the faith that was reckoned unto him for rightness consisted primarily in his fearless exercise of vital faculty in spite of the denial by experience of the existence of faculty. Here we have the charac-

¹ Rom. iv. 12.

teristic of all true faith—that it not only calls faculty into operation, but is also the witness of faculty to itself. But perhaps the most salient feature of this virtue is its courage. Faith is undeterred even by the absence of confidence, for it will face and accept uncertainty, and be willing to go through darkness without any definite assurance of light beyond. It asks for no guidance beyond its own interior impulse, and moves undeterred along a path that it does not see, towards an end that it does not know. The glory of faith is its independence of the ordinary aids demanded by the mind—sight, reason, hope, assurance, knowledge. All these may be lacking, and yet it will act, and act aright, for the darkness is not its own, but that of the mind through which it works ; so that in one sense it knows without knowing, and sees without mental mediation.

Faith is aroused in many ways ; it sometimes appears to spring spontaneously, as a well of water, from a deep Unconsciousness within, but more often it is vivified by certain conditions on the plane of the intellect. Belief is the awakener of Faith, but belief that implies an unquestioning acceptance of facts upon some kind of authority is far indeed from the Faith that saves, though it may be, and often is, the first step towards that supreme virtue. We can put it another way,

and say that belief may initiate what is a fundamental of true faith, an act of venture on the part of the soul, and provide a mental foundation on which faith may risk an often trembling footstep.

Thus we see the meaning of the Gospel revelation as a state of Divine rightness "out of faith into faith," for in faith we are presented not only with a condition, but also with a process and an end. Faith is the ground of our entrance into the heavenly state; it is also the movement of a life which is the cause of its own manifestations, and the fulfilment of its own progressive developments. We enter the Christ-way by the gate of Faith only to reach to deeper and deeper levels of the same mystic principle which first gave us access to our kingdom.

But this view of Faith as the Heaven-Life in activity needs to be approached from another standpoint. We have seen the "faith of God" to be the God-image in process of formation within; there is a sense in which Faith may look forward and claim the perfect stature long ere the fashioning be actually complete. Faith, in other words, is a definite act of affirmation of a spiritual standing not yet attained. It is, above all things, the prophetic virtue; its "eyes look right on"; it is the promise and potency of a

life that is not of the Time-level ; hence, while the man of Law strives for an uncertain future, the man of Faith claims a triumphant now. To say that he *realises* what he has a spiritual right to claim is, however, a different matter. Cardinal and fundamental as is this great principle of the inner life, it is yet the attribute of the soul still short of perfection. Faith is not of the ἀμαρτία level ; neither is it of the level of the highest Glory ; there is “a more excellent way”¹ termed by the Apostle Love, in which Faith is absorbed and transcended. Love is the climax of all the virtues, in that it is the spiritual consciousness *realised and made normal*. While Faith affirms and acts upon a truth which it may not yet have realised in outer consciousness, Love consciously enters into the kingdom. It translates inner fact into outer experience, spiritual potency into actual attainment, and is the crowning height of the soul because the full explication of all that the soul has in it to become.

Thus Faith and Love may be distinguished, the one as process, the other as climax. The man who is yet young in Faith has to become bold in affirmation of spiritual truths which are far as yet from being his own, truths whose veracity depends no whit on their being experienced in full self-consciousness. On these the disciple lays hold, in

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 31.

unflinching confidence that what are not as yet true *to* him are still unceasingly true *for* him. His aim is to "apprehend that for which he is apprehended."¹ Or, to put it in more modern form, he holds firmly to something that has a firm hold on him ; its full nature he may not know as yet, but he responds to a grip that is intuitively sensed, and yields to an ownership which is the basis of his truest freedom. Faith is the power of grip that lays hold on Eternal Life, even from out of the darkness of the Adam nature. On the plane of the phenomenal it yet affirms the real, and in affirming enters in.

But does pure affirmation suffice without the co-operation of Works ? Nothing can alter the truth of the soul's high vision of itself seen with the insight of faith—the great elemental truth that man is the Son of God, "and if a Son, then an heir."² Works can neither make nor unmake that for which only the free-will and grace of God has been responsible from the beginning ; they are, however, the instruments which attest the heritage, the agents by which it is administered. Of what use an estate that is claimed and made valid, if it be left at that ? So Works that are futile as causes are most effectual as results. As results, indeed, they are inevitable and indispensable. They create

¹ Phil. iii. 12.

² Rom. viii. 17.

nothing ; they express everything. Faith, which is the ground, the affirmation, and the vital movement of God in the soul, has fruit and expression on the outer plane in deeds and qualities which are evolved naturally from within, rather than fashioned laboriously from without. Given true faith, and the rest follows, as flowers from seed and light from the rising sun. The spiritual life is thus the effortless life, and at the same time the life of abundant stress. It is beautifully and profoundly simple, and yet in some respects harder than the severest legalism, in that it makes demands upon faculties which, with the majority of men, are yet in abeyance. The secret seems to lie in learning to live from the Goal as a centre, rather than in pressing towards it as an object of distant attainment.

But in what sense may we affirm with truth an end which we have not yet reached ? The insight of faith asserts with boldness that the Essential Self of a man is in God ; in God, therefore, he is complete, perfected, free. He knows that the Supreme has destined nothing short of His own Glory as the goal of each child of His Heart, *and with Him to will, to conceive, is to accomplish.* To attain, then, the end of our being by the way of Faith, we take our stand upon it as an *accomplished fact on the Eternal plane*, the plane of the Divine

Mind. Acting from that standpoint outwards and downwards, the victory which is *already* ours in the Eternity will eventually become ours in Time. This spiritual knowledge—the knowledge of the true state of the self in God—is the *summum bonum* of all knowledge; “every action without exception is comprehended within it, O son of Pritha.” “By it thou shalt see all things and creatures whatsoever in thyself, and then in Me. Even if thou wert the greatest of all sinners, thou shalt be able to cross over all sins in the bark of spiritual knowledge.”¹

The *ἀμαρτία* state is thus put away for him who has found his goal by faith. But the devotee has still to act, not for the Goal, but from the Goal. The man of faith who thus appropriates a recognised Goal existing in the consciousness of God, is yet on the plane of action—a plane which under *no* circumstances he dare ignore. But the works he does can have no influence on the *essential* state of his soul, nor add one iota to his “salvation,” for that “salvation” was secured before the foundation of the world. Nevertheless, while resting his heart on the finished thought of himself in the Divine Mind which constitutes his true Ego, he yet goes forth fearlessly to translate that Divine Conception into terms of the outer life, so learning to

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*

realise in Time the Eternal standpoint on which his faith is fixed.

“Do we then make the law of no effect through faith? God forbid; nay, we establish the law.”¹

¹ Rom iii. 31.

CHAPTER XIV

THE GOSPEL OF RIGHTNESS

STEP by step we have been considering the great series of opposites which form the subject-matter of the Pauline letters.

We have dealt first with the Old Man, that carnal nature which is the basis of the soul in material life, and which is to be "put off," in the sense of being no longer regarded as the true substance of the soul itself. We have discussed the probable Pauline meaning of the "Adam," and the relation of that term both to the man of flesh and the man of spirit. We have then attempted to look at the other side of the picture, at the New Man "from Heaven," who is the higher, essential Self of each member of the race. His coming to birth and manhood in human hearts is the "far-off Divine event to which the whole creation moves." And we have observed how in the Master this mystic Christ, the *Λόγος ἑμψυτος*, or inborn Word,¹

¹ Jas. i. 21.

had come to full self-utterance, and how therefore Jesus was, to St Paul, the New Man revealed in a microcosm.

Next we have studied the state of the Old and New Man, the results which follow on their manifestation in humanity. The state of the Old Man is sin, abstract and concrete ; sin in its primary sense of the limitation of the soul in a flesh nature, consequent on its "Fall" into the separated consciousness ; sin in its secondary sense of evil acts, thoughts, and tendencies, which spring directly from the self-turned consciousness, and the will averted from God. The two great opposites of the moral life are symbolised, as we have seen, by the terms *ὁργή* and *δόξα*, and are the centrifugal and centripetal forces which keep the soul in material life, on the one hand, and draw it, on the other, Godward. Each force has its own part to play in the scheme of human development.

Further, we have noted that sin, "when it is grown up," passes inevitably into death—nay, that the two are almost identical terms. The "dead" man is he who is suffering the consequences of a self-centred will in a lack of correspondence with his true, his Cosmic life. We have studied the subject from two aspects: (*a*) that of the "death" of man in *ἀμαρτία* ; and (*b*) that of the Universal Logos, who "died," or became immanent in man

that the race might be restored to its first estate by the power of the Divine Indwelling. The death of Jesus was, as we have seen, the symbol in time-relations of the Cosmic Calvary, as His resurrection was the symbol of the Cosmic Regeneration.

The state of the New Man, on the other hand, is Life and Grace, a fact which forms the substance and subject-matter of the Epistles. The Gospel urges the disciple to live in the atmosphere of grace as in his true and essential element, and to walk henceforth as one "alive from the dead."¹

We have further studied the relation of the Old and New Men to their respective vehicles—the *σῶμα ψυχικόν*, and the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*. Finally, an examination of the pair of opposites most peculiarly associated with St Paul—Law and Works, and Faith and Gospel—has revealed an interesting contrast between the two methods of soul-culture of the Old and New Men, which lead on the one hand to bondage, and on the other to spiritual freedom.

Thus every term in this great series of opposites has been shown to be a related term, the root of the series being the fundamental antithesis, Man in his twofold aspect of material and spiritual.

But the Pauline opposites do not stand alone.

¹ Rom. vi. 13.

The Gospel shows them to be united in a great Mean, or Tertium, which is termed the Rightness of God (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ). We have now to speak more fully as to the nature of this condition inadequately translated "righteousness," and to clarify certain statements concerning it, which have hitherto been left intentionally vague.

The "Gospel of Rightness" may be defined in the celebrated phrase which represented the limit as well as the acme of the Apostle's teaching, "Jesus Christ and Him crucified."¹ As we have observed, St Paul was well content with this sublime knowledge, because, from the higher, mystic standpoint, there is nothing further to know. Christ is truly the end of the law—nay, the end of the whole process of human development, for He is the New Man come to complete self-expression. In His perfection as a race-ideal He is not yet realised; but in Jesus the Apostle saw Him foreshadowed and epitomised. "Jesus the forerunner"—to borrow a phrase by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews²—is the typical Christ of this Dispensation; but if a Christ, then He must be a crucified Christ, for the Gospel of Rightness, which is the Gospel of Christhood, is *par excellence* the Gospel of the Cross. We have contended in a previous chapter for a more mystical

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 2.

² Heb. vi. 20.

reading of this profound Symbol than it generally receives at the hands of the commentators. The Cross, as we shall endeavour to show, is connected in a very peculiar and intimate manner with the notion of *δικαιοσύνη* in its Pauline sense of the "Rightness of God," and also with the great series of opposites which we have seen to be fundamental to the Apostle's whole teaching. Man, as the old mystics knew him, is an amalgam of the opposites mystically crossed in his personality. The Cross, therefore, is set up in human hearts ; it is, in the deeper reality, a subjective principle of which the material, objective Cross was the great Symbol in time-relations. Its vertical and transverse beams are the pairs of contrasts whose coming together in strife makes the Cross of pain on which a man is bound until the morn of his certain resurrection. Thus *ὀργή* and *δόξα*, destruction and construction, are reproduced on all the planes of his nature ; death and life fight for ages an unequal battle within him ; the Old Man and the New run counter in tendency and principle ; Adam and Christ unite in deadly conflict to produce ultimately "of the twain one new man."

Now the Gospel of the Cross is the Gospel of the balance of these conflicting opposites. It is the mystic *καταλλαγή* of which we have spoken in a previous chapter, applied to the moral nature of

the individual. The Epistles teach us this central, spiritual truth none the less surely because indirectly, and by way of inference. To gain further confirmation on the point, we must get at the Apostle's mental background, and acquaint ourselves with the kind of ideas likely to be familiar to this zealous and widely read mystic of an age when Hellenism, united with the East, had tinged even the mysticism of Judaism to no inconsiderable extent. And if we can find certain prevalent ideas that will interpret phraseology in the Epistles which would otherwise remain obscure, or at best but partially understood, we shall be employing a legitimate method of exegesis.

Now the mode of thought most largely "in the air" of the Apostle's age was Gnosticism, or, to be more precise, that tendency to Gnostic speculation which was developed at a later period into many conflicting sects and systems. Gnosticism is not peculiar to Christianity. It represents a particular spiritual attitude and point of view, and is to be found in so many diverse forms of religious and speculative culture antecedent to our Era that difficulties arise in attempting to assign to it a common source. Its entrance into the thought of the early part of the first century was probably through the Alexandrian theology on the one hand, and through the influences flowing from the old

Persian, Chaldæan, and Babylonian Mystery-lore on the other. It is, however, impossible at this distance of time to show the exact line of heredity of doctrines which began to impregnate Christianity at a period in history—eclectic in its aspects—in which the old streams of culture from various sources fused with the broader intellectual tendencies which were then beginning to make themselves felt. Gnosticism is rather an illustration of the fact that all religions which emphasise certain aspects of truth will have certain features in common, likeness of intellectual temperament invariably producing likeness of view-point, hence of doctrinal form. Wherever, for example, there is a profound feeling of the infinite distinction between God and the world, and the necessity for a Mediating Power in Creation; wherever the tremendous dualism between Good and Evil is sought to be reconciled in a manner that shall preserve an intuitively perceived essential unity; and, on the other hand, wherever the intimate contact of God with His world has been realised as a logical necessity of there being a world at all,—there is Gnosticism in some form or another, whether of the theosophic system of Philo, the cosmogony of Zoroastrianism, or the pantheism of India, and its Western representative the Jewish Kabbalah.

Of systematised Christian Gnosticism we have mainly the biassed accounts of Hippolytus and Irenæus touching certain sects of their own day. In the two hundred years between their time and the Apostle, the tendencies which had influenced the mind of the latter to no inconsiderable extent had developed into definite doctrinal systems, many of which were far removed from what St Paul would have deemed the golden mean of truth. Already we find him opposing the Docetic tendencies of the Church of Colosse, by an assertion of the reality of the earthly aspect of Jesus : "in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead in a *bodily* manner."¹ There are, on the other hand, in the Epistles expressions which point to a strong sympathy with the general line of thought that afterwards developed into systematised Gnosticism. "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect"² (*ἐν τοῖς τελείοις*, a technical Mystery-term for those who had entered the final stage of Christian initiation, in contradistinction to the "babes" and the "carnal" who were as yet outside, or in the early stages of, the Mysteries). "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world began."³ And again : "The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from genera-

¹ Col. ii. 9.² 1 Cor. ii. 6.³ 1 Cor. ii. 7.

tions, but now is made manifest to the saints,"¹ that is, to the elect ones, the *τελείοι*, and by no means to all Christians. For to many the Apostle withholds his deepest teachings: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. Ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are carnal."²

These expressions point to the existence in Apostolic teaching of a Gnosis, or wisdom, which was imparted gradually, and under conditions, to such as had made themselves fit for initiation into its mysteries. St Paul obviously desired to replace the numerous Mystery cults of antiquity by the Christian Mystery, which he felt was too wide to be contained in the old settings. He was a Gnostic in the sense of being himself an Initiate into the great Wisdom Mystery of the Ages, which was now revealed in a new form, and under the stimulus of a Mighty Authority. Hence we find him speaking as the Gnostics spoke in a later age of "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God,"³ "the Cross, the power of God."⁴ But what are the value in his hands of these technical terms? Are we to assume that a common vocabu-

¹ Col. i. 26.

² I Cor. iii. 1. The term "mystery" is used no less than eighteen times by the Apostle, and by no other New Testament writer.

³ I Cor. i. 24.

⁴ I Cor. i. 18.

lary represented different ideas at different times, or must we not rather remember that St Paul wrote at a date when Gnosticism had not yet become systematised and heretical?¹ Paucity of evidence concerning the Gnosticism of the Apostle's day throws us back upon teachings of a much later date; but even from them we can, by discounting much that is fantastic and exaggerated, gather something of the kind of thought-atmosphere which is reflected in the familiar Pauline phraseology. Since the pivot of his teaching is the mystery of the Cross, with regard to which he uses a technical Gnostic term, "the Cross ($\Sigma\tau\alpha\upsilon\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$), the Power ($\delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\acute{\iota}\varsigma$) of God," we will seek to recover the Gnostic thought-atmosphere surrounding that term.

As far as we may judge from the unsympathetic analysis of Gnostic teaching by Hippolytus, the Cross had a certain significance of a more Cosmic and all-embracing nature than that which has been preserved in the outer traditions of Catholic Christianity. The Stauros or stock was so-called

¹ "The various permutations of religious belief which we find in Irenæus, Hippolytus, Tertullian, would not be admitted by their exponents to be in conflict with the Christian faith, but would rather be regarded as exhibiting new and fruitful applications of principles common to all. Ecclesiastical opinion ultimately settled down in one direction rather than in another. But until this process was complete, each living system of belief might count upon a possible victory."—"The Poëmandres of Hermes Trismegistus," in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. v. No. 19, April 1904 (London). By Frank Granger.

from its essential element of steadfastness ; it is "that which stood, stands, and will stand,"—the symbol of Divine immutability which supports and preserves even where it destroys and reconstructs. The vertical line of the Cross symbolises the junction of the two great planes of being—Ennoia, the Divine Thought, and Sophia, Divine Substance, the Mother—by means of which the universe "above" is able to become articulate in the universe "below." This from its aspect as "Mediator," which is another form of the mystic At-one-ment.

But it has a second aspect. Its transverse line is, as it were, a boundary, or line of demarcation between the "above" and the "below," and typifies the essential distinction between the two worlds, even as the vertical line symbolises their union.¹ Truly a mystery : one of the profound and fundamental mysteries of the opposites, which are one when in reconciliation, and yet a unity which is eternally twofold. In modern terms we should speak of the two aspects of the Cross, symbolised by its transverse and vertical beams, as expressive, the one of God and the universe in transcendence, and the other of God in immanence—two opposites at once distinct and at once united. But for the line of juncture the universe would re-

¹ Hippolytus, *Refutation of all Heretics*, vi. 3. See also Irenæus, *Against Heresies*, bk. i. vol. i.

main unexpressed, from the point of view of Ennoia, the "above," and mereformless chaos from the point of view of substance, the "below." In this aspect it is the Divine Life in eternal procession, which impresses the Divine Idea on formless substance, and unites Heaven and earth in a marriage kiss.

Later Christianity has emphasised the separative, transcendent factor in Being at the expense of its complement, and has given to the world a conception of the great Symbol which is almost exclusively one of pain and humiliation. Hence Christianity has often been regarded quite wrongfully as the religion of suffering *par excellence*. We acknowledge the peculiar power of the Cross as a symbol of renunciation and love ; it is essentially this, but it is a great deal more besides. To the Gnostic Christian the Cross was life and light, and the perpetual union of the conflicting opposites. Not for several centuries after Christ was the symbol developed, and, as we think, completed, by the transformation of the Cross into the Crucifix. The Divine sufferer on the Cross of the Opposites was the full expression of the Gnostic view of the world as at-oned by the descent of the $\Sigma\omega\tau\acute{\eta}\rho$ (the Logos), who bridged an otherwise impassable gulf, and made of formless chaos the perfect image ($\epsilon\acute{\iota}\kappa\acute{\omega}\nu$) of the Pleroma above.

The logical development of this idea is that the

Logos immanent in matter, and its fructifying principle, is crucified on the Cross—nay, He *is* the Cross itself. And we find a trace of this thought in the Apostle's utterance: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by *whom* [not which] the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." The Cross here is the Master Himself, who brings the spiritual and the material, the Old Man and the New, into perfect at-one-ment in the disciple who is mystically crucified.¹

What, now, are the signs of a really crucified man, in whom the "above" is kept inviolate from the "below," and yet in whom the two have come into right relation? For we must not forget that this wider, philosophic view of the Cross, which is both Gnostic and Apostolic, is not only cosmic—it is also microcosmic. In man, too, the Pleroma above seeks to be reflected in the Sophia below; the Heavenly Self, Ennoia, to find expression in its earthly vehicle, the natural man, who may never overstep the eternal barrier, and forget that his sole function is to be a vehicle of the Highest.

The great sign of the truly crucified man is that he will be "right," or in harmony with the hitherto

¹ Cf. "The outspreading of His hands is the manifestation of the Cross." . . . "The Source of the Cross is the Man (Logos) whom no man can comprehend."—Untitled Apocalypse (*Fragments of a Faith Forgotten*, p. 548, G. R. S. Mead).

irreconcilable contrasts of life; he will understand pain, evil, and their "needs-be" by viewing them from the Cross's centre, where pain and joy, evil and good, come into right relation and are reconciled. He will sense in himself the inexpressible mystery of the Cross, symbolised by the point of convergence where that which had been two complete antitheses now become one, and yet still remain two. For not the least part of the mystery is the preservation of the opposites in a changed form. By a miracle of balance, good that was immature and potential, and evil that was the distortion and prostitution of a necessary principle, fall into right relations and persist, the one as life, the other as the basis of life,—the one developed, the other controlled. The "justified" man does not cancel or wipe out one opposite by the predominance of the other: he brings two wills, two natures, and two laws which formerly ran counter to each other, to the Mystic Centre, where they cross and at the same time unite. No element in his complex nature is given up, but each is made "right" by the finding of the true centre of gravity within him. The Old Man, for example, remains, but with a changed character; no longer overbalancing the feebler movements of the Heavenly Man, but "crucified, with his affections and lusts,"¹—that is

¹ Gal. v. 24.

to say, crossed with the Spirit in a unity that is a duality in absolute balance. The self that is the root of the sin-state remains, but now in an equipoise so delicate that sin, which was self in excess, is done away, leaving only the uses of self as the undergirding of Spirit. The legalising principle also remains, but in a subtle balance with faith, the two having issue in the Gospel of Reconciliation which fulfils the substance of law even where it destroys the shadow. Pain remains in the balanced state, even in a deeper intensity ; but it is the pain of the Christ, the world-pain, which co-exists with, and is indeed the condition of, the bliss of the Christ.¹ None can truly know that bliss who have not known that pain, in whom the Cross in its sense of separation and sacrifice is not one with the Cross in its sense of union and reconciliation. Both aspects meet in the man who is really crucified with Christ ; he represents and works out in himself the Divine Emptying, so expressing in his personality the side of life that is pain and limitation ; and in becoming one with the eternal Sacrifice becomes one also with the eternal Fulness. For at the Cross's centre sacrifice is taken into fulness, pain into bliss, and the Christ feels both together, and in Him both have their *raison d'être*.

Now it will be seen from the foregoing that the

¹ See *The Gnostic Crucifixion*, p. 65, by G. R. S. Mead.

true Crucifixion, the mystery of the Cross, is the mystery of the Christ. Hence the drama of Calvary is for all time the typical crucifixion, in that the sufferer is not earth-man but Christ-man. The crucifixion of the two thieves possibly symbolised that humanity shares in the Divine humiliation, and will one day share in the Divine exaltation ; but from our present standpoint of the perfect union of opposites, only a Christ can be truly crucified. For the very nature of the Cross implies the juncture of two opposites ; there is no true cross without the point of union, the centre where transverse and vertical meet. Hence the truly crucified man is the justified or “right” man, he in whom the lines of opposites have met in a mystic *καταλλαγή*. In mankind at large the opposites, though in strife within, are not yet crucified or crossed in meeting ; they may be symbolised thus, \perp ; in the Christ, and in him who is becoming Christ, they are thus, \perp . We see now that the Cross and the *καταλλαγή*, or At-one-ment, are one and the same. The crucifixion in its relations of time and space did not create the Divine reconciliation ; it rather symbolised that deep, interior crucifixion in the mystic nature of the Christ which *was in itself* the *καταλλαγή*, that union in His “justified” consciousness of the fulness of the Divine Humanity, and the pain and need of man.

Thus the symbol of the Divine Sufferer, with arms outstretched as though to unite each opposite of the mystic Cross, that both may be reconciled in Himself, is the Cosmic symbol *par excellence*, the symbol of the Perfect Man, the revealer of the Gospel of Rightness.

He is at the Cross's centre, where the transverse and vertical meet at once in union and separation.¹ His Cross is placed between opposites—sinner and saved, the one who knows Him and the one who knows Him not. At the mid-point of the mystery, “at the sixth hour, that is mid-day, when there was greatest light there was also greatest darkness”²—again a suggestion of the blending of contrasts. Finally, having atoned the world potentially in His own great At-one-ment, He rises to the fulness of universal life.

That the crucified should rise again follows on the nature of the mystic crucifixion itself, in which we have attempted to show the opposites related in such fashion as to produce a new or “risen” type of being, the Super, or Cosmic Man. Such an one is already risen, even when on the Cross, for His “crucified” nature embraces the widest

¹ Col. i. 20: “And *having made peace* by the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” A very mystic statement of the union of opposites in Him who is truly crucified.

² *The Gnostic Crucifixion*, p. 29, G. R. S. Mead.

universality with a retained individuality, and realises the life of God in and through a controlled and obedient lower nature. In the Perfect Man, every heavenly quality finds a needed basis and support in its corresponding contrast ; the bondage element, for example, lends just enough curb to the liberty of the spirit to ensure balance ; love has a basis in law ; bliss knows itself in and by its sister, pain. The Christ bears the marks of His Passion even into highest Heaven ; He will bear them so long as He is Christ, for the Passion and the Triumph are for ever blended in the Perfect Man.

Perhaps the finest piece of writing in all the Epistles is that in which the Apostle gives a detailed analysis of the character of the man who is "right." To the building of this, the perfect Christ character, all his exalted ethics converge. Throughout the Epistles the practical ideal of the justified man is painted in lofty word-pictures, but nowhere so concisely, or in terms so perfectly chosen, as in 1 Cor. 13.

Here we have been given, in fourteen immortal phrases, that acme of moral perfection, love, which analysis discovers to be the state of the perfect balance. St Paul presents this to us in a three-fold setting ; he shows 'Αγάπη, or love in its highest sense, to be composed of those elements of

union, separateness, and immutability which are the elements of the mystic Cross. For the man of love is essentially the "crucified" man, God's highest product and the race's hope.

"Love suffereth long and is kind"; it is the Cross from the standpoint of union, in which it draws into itself the pain-side of things in a passion that shall last as long as there is pain to suffer.

"Love strives not emulously; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not its own [*lit.* itself]; is not provoked; does not reckon up and enter an account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth in the truth." From this standpoint we see the Cross in its aspect of separation; ἀγάπη, or universal love, sharply marked off from self-love in its several unlovely characteristics — jealousy, pride, conceit, ill-behaviour, self-interest, irritability, malignity, obliquity.

"Love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, awaits the issue of all things. Love never falls away" (ἐκπίπτω). Here is presented the element of steadfastness in the truly crucified man—that principle of utter immobility in good which is the significant quality of all character that is rightly based and rightly balanced. In the Perfect Man, as in the Father of Lights

Himself, there is "no variability, nor shadow cast by turning."

This Gnostic view of the Cross as the great equipoise which transforms both man and nature from Chaos to Cosmos by the united action of Power and Wisdom (*δύναμις*, the Father, and *σοφία*, the Mother), is lifted beyond the stigma of heterodoxy by the testimony offered to it of human experience. All who have thought spiritually and profoundly concerning the mystery of life, will have come to recognise that Wisdom and Power—whether under their Pauline synonyms of Christ and the Cross, or some equivalent terms—are the fundamental supports of the universe. The at-one-ment of these essential principles is life and the supreme condition of life, both in the macrocosm and the microcosm. We have spoken, it may be, too symbolically for some in our endeavour to lift the mystery of the Cross into the heights of our own subjective being, and to set it up, not only "on a green hill far away, without a city wall," but on a mystic Mountain, intimately near, the "Mount" of the soul's highest attainments. It was the Cross in this personal aspect of spiritual balance that we believe St Paul had in mind when he exclaimed, "I am crucified with Christ," for he goes on to utter the paradox which naturally arises in connection with the mystically crucified or balanced man,

—that of life in equipoise with death : “nevertheless I live, and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”¹ He may have meant, too, that in the great Cosmic passion mysteriously figured forth in the Calvary event he also had a share by virtue of the link that bound all men to the mystic Sufferer. His words, however, savour of a personal and intimate experience, rather than a general privilege which he had in common with all Christians. While all men in a certain sense are “crucified with Christ,” it is only the very few who can triumphantly *affirm* that condition.

It is necessary, in conclusion, to distinguish between two different methods of reconciling the opposites which compose the warp and woof of human life. For convenience we can divide these methods into two typical classes. There is the Aristotelian μέσον, and the Pauline δικαιοσύνη.

The method of the former is to bring each extreme to a mean or mid-way state which shall be the result of the modification of one opposite by another. It is a condition of neutrality. The method of the latter is to retain the essential qualities of the extremes, but to so alter their mutual relation as to make them complements in a new whole. The eternal opposites eternally persist ; the problem is to relate them in such a way

¹ Gal. ii. 20.

that instead of cancelling they complete each other.

"This," says Mr G. K. Chesterton, in a book which for brilliance and suggestiveness cannot be overpraised, "was the big fact about Christian ethics, the discovery of the New Balance." We venture to quote his remarks on this subject more fully: "Paganism declared that virtue was in a balance; Christianity declared that it was in a conflict: the collision of two passions apparently opposite. Of course they were not really inconsistent; but they were such that it was hard to hold simultaneously. . . . Everywhere the creed made a moderation out of the still crash of two impetuous emotions. Take, for example, the matter of modesty, of the balance between mere pride and mere prostration. The average pagan, like the average agnostic, would merely say that he was content with himself, but not insolently self-satisfied; that there were many better, and many worse; that his deserts were limited, but he would see that he got them. In short, he would walk with his head in the air, but not necessarily with his nose in the air. This is a manly and rational position, but it is open to the objection we noted against the compromise between optimism and pessimism—the 'resignation' of Matthew Arnold. Being a mixture of two things, it is a dilution of two

things ; neither is present in its full strength, or contributes its full colour. This proper pride does not lift our heart like the tongue of trumpets ; you cannot go clad in crimson and gold for this. On the other hand, this mild rationalist modesty does not cleanse the soul with fire, and make it clear like crystal ; it does not (like a strict and searching humility) make a man as a little child, who can sit at the feet of the grass. It does not make him look up and see marvels ; for Alice is to grow small if she is to be Alice in Wonderland. Thus it loses both the poetry of being proud, and the poetry of being humble. Christianity sought by some strange expedient to save both of them.

“ It separated the two ideas, and then exaggerated them both. In one way man was to be haughtier than he had ever been before ; in another way he was to be humbler than he had ever been before. In short, Christianity got over the difficulty of combining furious opposites by keeping them both, and keeping them both furious. One can hardly think too little of oneself. One can hardly think too much of one’s soul. . . . The Church hates that combination of two colours which is the feeble expedient of the philosophers. It hates that evolution of black into white which is tantamount to a dirty grey. . . . All that I am urging here can be expressed by saying that Christianity sought in

most cases to keep two colours co-existent, but pure. It is not a mixture like russet or purple ; it is rather like a shot silk, for a shot silk is always at right angles, and is in the pattern of the Cross.

“ . . . It is constantly assured, especially in our Tolstoyan tendencies, that when the lion lies down with the lamb, the lion becomes lamblike. . . . That is simply the lamb absorbing the lion instead of the lion eating the lamb. The real problem is : Can the lion lie down with the lamb, and still retain his royal ferocity ? That is the problem the Church attempted ; that is the miracle she achieved.”¹

Man being essentially a union of two poles, the highest ethic is that which will aim at preserving his root duality ; otherwise he ceases to be man. In the perfect state the opposites are in union, or right relation ; in the state of discipleship and growth they are in collision. It is, indeed, through the clash and turmoil of conflicting elements that we attain to the ultimate “rightness” which is union. And even here the opposites, though stilled, are not destroyed. The “new balance,” as Chesterton terms a conception which is older than Christianity, but which Christianity has the distinctive merit of having always kept in the forefront of her thought, signifies that no aspect of the nature can be lost

¹ *Orthodoxy*, pp. 168-180.

that consists in an elemental contrast. Those manifestations of the Old Man which when *unadjusted* become evil, will persist in the balanced state, but in such relation to the spirit that they no longer throw the nature out of harmony. To particularise what we have before stated in general terms : evil is self-love in one or another of its myriad forms, and the grosser evils are the result of the over-attraction of the self for the material basis of its being. Now self-love, when brought to the centre of the mystic Cross, does not cease : it changes its object. It becomes love of another aspect of the self—love as passionate, as intense, in a sense as individualistic, as before, yet with a totally changed conception of individuality. It has come into right relations with the New Man in the heart, who is the Cosmic Individual, and, while lending Him a firm, concrete basis in material life, it enters into His wider selfhood, which is not that of the unit, but of the many in one. The personal self and the universal spirit complete each other in a tertium which is not a mere blur of qualities, but a shot of distinct and different *motifs*.

Further, the material basis of life will persist in the Perfect Man. His body will indeed be more precious than in the distant days when to him the body was the self, because it is now his instrument

—nay, his temple—and he its priest and guardian, keeping watch and ward over its delicate mysteries. His passions, too, persist; he can be fiery, tempestuous, ay, pitiless as the whirlwind when the Spirit is at the helm, and has the storm in the hollow of its hand. Death, too, that strange complement of life, exists in the Perfect Man as one of the eternal opposites, but He is no longer dead to the same aspect of the environment as heretofore. “I die daily”;¹ “We are buried with Him into death”;² “Reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God,”³ exclaims the Apostle, again uniting the fundamental paradoxes. Only once does he seem to wipe them out in his higher tertium, when he asserts, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus”;⁴ and that is because his spiritual eyes are on so stupendous a whole that the components have sunk out of the immediate view. They are there, nevertheless, for the vision when it descends to the particular. As though, looking at a vast and perfect mosaic, one were to say: “There is neither blue nor green, there is neither black nor white, there is neither square nor oblong, for all is at-oned in the com-

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 31.² Rom. vi. 4.³ Rom. vi. 11.⁴ Gal. iii. 28.

plete design." Blue and green, black and white, square and oblong, will start forth out of the wholeness when the eye chooses to particularise.

St Paul's Gospel, in a word, was the Gospel of the Over-Man. It recognised in the Christ a higher kind of consciousness that should not only unite the contraries, but should also include in itself, without absorbing, the partial elements of partial men. To be all the opposites in one related whole, and therefore none of them exclusively, is one of the characteristics of the Perfect Man into whom the members were to "grow up in all things."¹ In other words, the Christ who stood to St Paul both as the Author and the Exemplar of his Gospel of Rightness at-oned each disciple in His all-embracing consciousness, and at the same time guided each towards the goal of becoming eventually himself a whole. The Pauline doctrine of the union of the members in one Body,² which the superpersonal consciousness of the Master indwelt, is one of the great mysteries to be learned by him who is on the path of Christhood, for he too has to strive to realise perfection of self-consciousness by becoming eventually the one in many, and the many in one. He too

¹ Eph. iv. 15.

² 1 Cor. xii. 12, 27; Eph. iii. 6; Col. i. 18; 1 Cor. vi. 15; Eph. v. 30.

has to unite the opposites ; to "take the self in separation into the Self as union."¹ He is a member of the Over-consciousness of his Master ; and by learning through love to realise that mystic union, he forwards his own development towards the same great end.

The members, or "limbs," of the body is one of the most general Gnostic mystery terms, both Christian and pre-Christian, and its constant use by the Apostle is another indication of his close touch with the line of thought that afterwards developed into systematised Christian Gnosticism. The symbol was probably taken over from the Osiric mysteries, in which the "Limbs of Osiris" (the Logos) are represented as scattered through the world, and reunited at the general consummation.² The "Limbs" signify humanity in the separated consciousness, their union, the restoration of humanity to a knowledge of its true self in God.

¹ *The Gnostic Crucifixion*, p. 63, G. R. S. Mead.

² Cf. *Untitled Apocalypse of the Codex Brucianus* : "The union of their limbs is the ingathering of Israel."

CONCLUSION

WE may sum up in a very few words the main thought of this study, which is also the basis of the Pauline philosophy, namely that the world of the inner, as of the outer, life owes its very existence to the play of opposing forces. And step by step we have considered the nature and meaning of the great fundamental antitheses as they are set over against each other in the letters of Paul to the churches. It has also been an axiomatic principle that we can only understand one side of a contrast by placing it over against its direct contrary. The New Man taken alone, and the Old Man taken alone, are potentials only ; they have concrete existence, they become facts of actual experience, only as they are brought into the arena of mutual contact. Standing apart, they are and remain abstractions. Our attempts at defining and expanding the Pauline contraries, therefore, have presupposed their continual and eternal union in experience, for without such union we should

know nothing practically of either term of an antithesis. We speak, for example, of Spirit in terms which sometimes imply that in Itself, apart from Its manifestations, It can be immediately known. But St Paul speaks of the "fruits of the spirit,"¹ and a fruit implies a union of contraries. As a product, it is ever of twain. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, emerge out of deep contrasts ; they are the potential and ideal made explicit in the material and actual, the unfolding of the New Man in and by means of the Old.

Not only have we learned that the existence of a state is the guarantee of the co-existence of the opposite, but we have been assured as to the result that is to accrue from this encounter of conflicting forces. In every antithesis something of Heaven is matched over against something of earth, but the often unequal matching leaves the mind in frequent uncertainty as to the issue. Had St Paul given us no word beyond Rom. v. 20, he would yet have stated one of the highest truths in the universe : "Where sin abounded, grace did abound yet more exceedingly." In this phrase he has put his finger, with an immortal touch, on the vital secret of all true optimism, and has shown us,

¹ Gal. v. 22.

what a superficial knowledge of human experience might have rendered doubtful, that Heaven is always the winning side. Temporary failure may seem to prove the contrary, so that we look sometimes for the annihilation of a world whose roots appear to be established in evil ; but the humiliation passes, and the world endures. The something of Heaven has held its own against the something of earth. In the matching of unequal antitheses Heaven must ultimately win, because grace is "over and above more than enough," as the strong, untranslatable Greek word has it (*ὑπερπερισσεύω*), and grace is side by side with sin ; each is the implication of the other.

The Gospel's injunction to "fight the good fight of faith"¹ is thus a promise as well as a command. Faith is a needed element in this warfare, because the issue is not yet. But only not yet with regard to the human plane ; on the Divine plane the end is assured. For the Apostle goes on to urge : "*lay hold on eternal life*" : make your own by an effort of the whole man what already is in the being of God. It must be actual for you here and now, for you cannot lay hold of a mere possibility. By faith you affirm, and so make real that whereunto you are also called, but which at present is not yours by experience.

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 12.

Faith, therefore, is the beginning and end of the Gospel of Rightness. None should be appalled by the clash and the conflict ; for where the opposites are, there too is the mystic union of opposites, the balance and rightness implicit in every antithesis. But faith is needed to claim and make real that which at present is not a realised fact ; hence the Gospel which is an assertion of the "Everlasting Yea" proceeds out of faith as a starting-point to ever fuller and fuller depths of the same principle.

Faith is thus the great condition of the candidate for Christhood. And Christhood is St Paul's objective, the Alpha and Omega of his Epistles, the great text that flames across each fervid page—the Christhood of the Master, the like promise for those who are "joint-heirs with Him." Hence he sounds so often the keynote of Christhood, *καταλλαγή*, at-one-ment, reconciliation. The putting away of sin, the "bringing nigh of them that were far off," the restoration of a "fallen" consciousness, the affirmation of a new, a spiritual day that was to dawn over the horizon of an already far-spent night—these things were all involved in the great ideal, these the burden of an optimism which has scarcely had its superior in the world of religious thought. With this Christ-key in our hands, the inwardness of the Apostle's message, coloured as it was by the symbology and traditions

of his day and race, will no longer elude us. We have endeavoured in these pages to reach the secret of a mind in which Gnostic and Pharisee fought an often unequal struggle, and our efforts will be more than successful if some new enthusiasm for the World-Mystery which the Apostle so faithfully unfolds be kindled afresh in hearts for whom his meaning may have suffered the loss that is common to a perilous familiarity.

APPENDIX

A SHORT EXEGESIS AND SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS. (Chs. i.-x.)

Chapter I.—St Paul strikes at once the keynote of the Epistle in his great declaration that in the Gospel is revealed the “Rightness of God” (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ).

v. 17.

“Rightness” is a word of wider import than “righteousness”; it represents the Divine condition, and may not be limited to a purely ethical content. The term suggests an equilibrium of the whole being, the at-one-ing of contrasts, the balance of conflicting elements, whether in a universe or a soul. It is the substance and reality of which righteousness, in the sense of ethical rectitude, is the shadow and the sign. There can be no true, outward δικαιοσύνη of life and conduct that does not proceed from the δικαιοσύνη of God, a state that must be found within the soul before it can be manifested without. The equivalent term is spiritual equipoise.

But the revelation of “rightness” implies, *ipso facto*, v. 18. a contrast with “unrightness,” which contrast, for the more effective presentment of his doctrine, is sounded by the Apostle at the very outset of the argument. Between the “Rightness of God” and the unrightness of evil is an antagonism that can only be described by

the term *ὀργή*, or “wrath.” “*Ὀργή*” here represents the state which inevitably arises in the soul when the light of the spirit is opposed by the darkness of the senses. So we get at the outset of the treatise a dark word-picture of the sort of evil—practically the only evil in the philosophical sense of the term—which automatically provokes *ὀργή*, viz. a deliberate rejection of the revelation of God to the soul. “They exchanged the truth of God for a lie.”

v. 25.

Chapter II.—Following this comes the stern lesson that such evil-doers, and those also who condemn them while practising the same, are storing inevitable retribution. The Apostle desires at the outset to dissociate his “Gospel of Rightness” from an easy Antinomianism, in which consequences have no place. It is of the very

Ch. i. 28.
(R. V.
margin.)

essence of the Gospel that those who do not “approve to have God in their knowledge” will be given up by Him to the things of their lower preference, for there is no escaping righteous judgment. The law of consequence is simple but inflexible: eternal life for the patient well-doer; *ὀργή* and anguish for the soul that worketh evil—these things coming as the necessary fruit and outcome of previous acts and tendencies. This law is universal.

v. 7.

No advantage of birth or racial status can affect the immutable justice of God, by which all who violate the law of right action are sinners, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. Therefore the members of the chosen race may trust to no exemption; they are rather to be judged before others by reason of their fuller light, for the real criterion of judgment is the extent of knowledge in him who sins. To St Paul, a true child of Abraham is one who has attained a certain state of inward conformity to Divine law.

v. 12.

Ch. ix. 6. “They are not all Israelites
Ch. ii. 29. which are of Israel”; neither is he a Jew who is one

outwardly ; and the privileges of circumcision may be revoked if circumcision be of the letter only, rather than of the spirit and the heart.

Chapter III.—The question naturally follows : what advantage, then, have Abraham's seed? Much, for v. 1. as representative people they were chosen to mirror the workings of God in humanity. To them were entrusted the "oracles of God." And what if some v. 2. were faithless to their calling, the faithlessness of man cannot annul the faithfulness of God, which is thrown v. 3. into greater relief by the contrast. But it may be asked : v. 5. if the Ideal Righteousness be set off (*συνίστησι*) by comparison with human unrighteousness, how may evil be condemned, and the guilty man reckoned a sinner? v. 7. Do we not excuse ourselves by this argument which some slanderously affirm that we use? By no means ; because, having proclaimed the sin-state to be universal, we have thereby declared the inexorableness of a truth which admits of no favouritism, nor evasion by sophistry. v. 9. (Argument implied in ver. 9.)

Having established this point (the universality of the sin-state), the Apostle proceeds to set forth the nature of sin, and its corollary, law. Sin—*ἁμαρτία*, the "missing of the mark"—is the not doing or being that which v. 19b. man ought to do or to be, and by the revelation by law of an "ought" he is made to realise both his "mark," and his coming short. Law brings the knowledge of, v. 20b. though not the remedy for, sin.

But there has also been made known, apart from law v. 21. which makes sinners but which cannot save, a state of Divine "Rightness" (*δικαιοσύνη*) which is the perfect opposite and complement of the condition it supersedes. *ἁμαρτία* is lack ; *δικαιοσύνη* is fulness. *ἁμαρτία* is negative, the state of eternal coming short ; *δικαιοσύνη*

- is positive, the state of illimitable attainment. This “Rightness of God,” which is St Paul’s great declaration to humanity, is by means of the faith possessed by Christ (διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ),¹ and is revealed in all those who have like faith. As the sin-state is universal, and levels all to the same stature, so the faith-state is universal, and is the hope and promise of all men. (Argument implied in ver. 23.) There is in the present chapter of the Epistle a skilful emphasis of the elemental contrast between “law” and “faith,” νόμος and πίστις. Both principles are prominent in human development; both reveal to man his “ought,” his mark, and his coming short. But while νόμος springs from the external plane, and stops at an external revelation, πίστις goes further, and starts in the soul a movement towards the end for which it was created. Πίστις is indeed *that movement itself*. The man who has the “faith of Jesus” is freed from the despair of eternal coming short. But what is this “faith of Jesus”? He Himself likens it to the self-evolving force in a grain of mustard-seed, which transforms the infinitely little into the infinitely great. The “faith” of the grain of mustard-seed is the mustard tree within it, pushing upward and onward through the superincumbent soil. The “faith of Jesus” is the Christ-stature within the soul, seeking to fulfil itself by patient growth, and ceaseless activity. It is the power which removes sin, or lack, by supplying in the soul a reservoir of eternal fulness. Its nature is redemptive, *i.e.*
- v. 22. Luke xvii. 6. v. 24. it restores mankind to a pristine and forgotten Sonship; it is the instrument of that profound and mystic condition which the Apostle figuratively terms the Ἀπολύτρωσις,—a word superficially translated “release on payment of

¹ Cf. the expression in ch. iv. 12, πίστεως τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ; and in ver. 16, ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ.

ransom," but which has also the sense of something v. 24. given in exchange.

It is not without reason that theologies have been built up upon this word, for ransom, exchange, sacrifice, is the fundamental condition of life. But ransom may be of two kinds. We may have either the false ἀπολύτρωσις, the popular currency, which purchases a mess of pottage at the price of the Kingship of the Heavens; or the true ἀπολύτρωσις, which perpetually offers the old self in exchange for the New Man, and the new standard. In ver. 24 the Apostle sets forth the kind of "ransom" or price which justifies, namely the "ἀπολύτρωσις which is in Christ." He points to the radiant manifestation in Jesus of this spirit of sacrifice which was revealed and poured out both in His life of devotion, and His death of obedience. By virtue of His possessing this spirit in fulness, He becomes for the Christian the representative of the true ἀπολύτρωσις in operation, and "takes away" sin by establishing in its place the laws and conditions of Rightness.

In this sense, too, Jesus, the typical Christ, is likened by St Paul to the Mercy-Seat of the old covenant v. 25. (ἱλαστήριον), because in Him was exhibited the mighty mystery of the Perfect Man, the Balance, or At-one-ment, which was foreshadowed aforetime in one symbolic moment by the union of Shekinah and priest at the mystic place of meeting within the Veil. The mystery of the ἱλαστήριον pointed the Israelite to the full meaning and end of man, and St Paul, an "Israelite indeed," recognised in the Master a living symbol and representation of the ancient truth. Jesus individually realised the ἱλαστήριον idea, and presented it anew as the race's highest goal.

In Him, too, were declared the attributes of rightness v. 25.

- v. 25. and forbearance in the Divine Nature which cancel and make good the shortcomings of men. For in God there is no incompleteness, no missing of the mark. His perfection completely wipes out and atones for human imperfections ; from His standpoint they are as though they have never been, though, from the sinner's standpoint, there is no escaping the inexorable demands of spiritual law. So Christ, the perfect or "right" man, justifies, not by imputing to the race a righteousness which is His and not theirs, but by revealing an attitude of the Divine Nature which eternally and perpetually "makes right" the wrong and incompleteness of man.
- v. 26.

This Rightness of God being as yet for the most part unrealised in human experience, the power which claims, affirms, and acts upon the truth of its existence is the power of faith. Thus the self-glorification inevitable to perfection by human endeavour is absolutely excluded, because the pristine "rightness" of the soul is not to be regained by acts of merit, but is rather to be appropriated as a Divine gift, the inheritance of man from God. And if the race is the Son of God, the true Israel is humanity in the spirit, and justification is both for circumcision and uncircumcision alike. (Argument implied in ver. 29.) Thus the law which was needed as a revelation of ἀμαρτία finds its fulfilment in the state in which ἀμαρτία is met and satisfied, the state of the "Rightness of God."

v. 29.

Chapter IV.—This chapter shows the orderly development of the doctrine of Universalism from foregoing premises. Having included Jew and Gentile alike under the law of sin, the Apostle establishes the converse of this truth by including both alike under a law of faith. And he proceeds to base his argument on the ground most likely to be convincing to an orthodox Jew, the state of his forefather Abraham. Abraham, far from

v. 2.

being the progenitor of an exclusive and favoured people, was actually the founder of Universalism, inasmuch as his entrance into the righteous state was not through the works of a specific system of law, but by the operation of a principle of spiritual life immanent in all men. Moreover, this state was his before circumcision, the sign of circumcision being given him in token that the rightness which he had won was for all who should walk in the faith which he had in uncircumcision. "That he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be in uncircumcision, that righteousness might be reckoned unto them."

v. 10.

v. 11.

Here the allegory—for so the birth of Isaac is elsewhere declared to be—of the revival of Abraham's parental powers in his old age is a fine suggestion of the meaning of the "faith that was reckoned to him for righteousness." To say that it consisted in merely believing what he was told is to miss the very heart of the story. The promise to Abraham was that he should re-create; the faith of Abraham lay in his being re-creative. His trust in the existence of the vital principle in his body "now as good as dead," symbolises that the faith which saves is an interior power of spiritual life, a seed of God in the soul whose fruitfulness can never die. Faith is the fearless exercise of faculty in face of the apparent denial by experience of the existence of faculty. It is, too, the witness of faculty to itself. So Abraham's belief in the revival of physical vitality was figuratively reckoned to him for righteousness, that it might symbolise for us the workings of that quickening Spirit, immanent in all men, whose triumph in the deathless Christ is the guarantee of a like triumph for all.

Gal. iv.

24.

v. 19.

v. 20.

v. 22.

v. 23.

Chapter V.—In the next chapter the Apostle states the moral of his thesis by showing how his converts may

lay practical hold on the Gospel of Rightness which has been opened up to them through Jesus Christ, and may revel (καυχώμεθα) in the certain prospect of reaching the perfection of God, the falling short of which is ἁμαρτία, or sin. For the state of natural weakness in Divine things in which all are born has been met at this time by an outpouring of the Christ-Spirit so free and complete as to be fitly symbolised as a sacrifice unto death. In this chapter St Paul makes, for the first time in the Epistle, his great distinction between Christ, the Universal Logos, the Life and Light of the world (Χριστός without any qualifying prefix), and “our Lord Jesus Christ,” He in whom the Logos manifests in specific time and space relations. The death of Χριστός is the outpoured Life whereby the worlds are sustained, and which is given anew at great spiritual crises (κατὰ καιρὸν—“at the appointed time”) in answer to the unconscious call of human need and sin. (Cf. *Bhagavad Gita*, ch. iv., where the same truth occurs : “I produce myself among creatures whenever there is a decline of virtue, and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world.”) But this mystic “laying down” of life is not according to the ordinary human standard, whereby the good alone can excite devotion unto death ; Divine Love outpours itself that it may neutralise the forces that tend to unrightness, and gives itself for evil that the “Rightness of God” may ensue. “Rightness” is the constant maintenance of equilibrium. Christ then truly dies, or lays down His life for sin, and in His “death” the love of God is “commended,” *i.e.* placed in contrast with its opposite (συνίστησι), that the balance of the universe on its spiritual side may be preserved. We, therefore, the human arena of the opposition, being now brought into harmony by the outpouring of the Divine sacrifice of

v. 2.

v. 6.

v. 7.

v. 8.

v. 8.

v. 10.

Christ, shall be abundantly perfected in His life. And not only so with regard to the Christ in us, but we are also made glad in God through Him by whom we have received the fact of this reconciliation, our Lord Jesus Christ. v. 11.

The Apostle now proceeds to develop yet more fully his remarkable use of antithesis. The trespass of Adam, and the Mosaic law by which sin is rendered sinful, are chosen as figures of the human state of birth to the material and death to the spiritual, which is the presupposition of the ultimate condition of spiritual being revealed in the Christ. Jesus, the spiritually perfect man, stands for that state; hence He is the necessary antithesis to Adam, His perfect obedience needing the contrast-effect of a primitive disobedience. What was lost in the Adam is more than made up in the Christ. The antithesis, indeed, is not equal, for whereas a condemnatory judgment arose out of the sin of one, the gracious gift of restored rightness came of the sin of many, and far outbalances penalty with glory.¹ “Where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly.” v. 12. v. 19. v. 16. v. 20.

Chapter VI.—This truth of the excess of grace over sin may be wrongfully used in favour of continuing in the sin-state that grace may have meaning and efficacy. To the baptized convert, however, this argument is inadmissible, since in him *ἀμαρτία* is as completely put away as though it had never been. For in baptism he died the death of his Master to the sin-state, that, like Him, he may attain to the resurrection of the Christ-state. Because in Jesus the universal Christ had attained to perfect expression, and, being immanent in all men, had therefore triumphed in one man for all, the Christian v. 1. v. 4.

¹ “The free gift was by occasion of many offences unto justification,” ver. 16.

- is to account himself dead to the life of limitation, and alive unto the life of grace. He is no longer to live as a slave under dominion of law, but as a conqueror in the kingdom of grace. May he, then, use his freedom from law as an excuse for wrong-doing? No, for in passing from law to grace he has merely exchanged his service. As a bond-slave of the old state he was free in regard to the obligations of the new, but now as bond-servant to God he yields a willing service for the end and reward of eternal life.
- v. 27.
- v. 15.
- v. 17.
- v. 23.

Chapter VII.—Or to change the illustration: a woman who is joined to a man during the lifetime of her husband is deemed by the law an adulteress, but on the death of her husband she is free from the law, and from the stigma of sin, even though she marry again. Similarly the law died in Christ, thereby freeing us for union with another, even with the Risen One whose triumph was for our sanctification.

- v. 7. Nevertheless, law is not in itself sin, though it be the *revealer* of sin; though its arrival in human experience bring to an end the state of the soul's first innocence.
- v. 9. Laws have a Divine use, in that they bring home to the soul the *insufficiency* of the *ἀμαρτία* state. The man of flesh is a bond-slave under the *régime* of sin; he is forced by its tyranny to do that which the Higher Self forbids; nevertheless, his very unwillingness to do evil testifies that the law which forbids it is good.
- v. 22. Two elements are at ceaseless war in man; the law of the Old Adam imposes its own desires on the higher will, and subjects it to the evil to which it is essentially opposed. But he who is rightly identified with the spiritual man knows that actions performed against the Higher Will are not of the true, but of the false self, over whom the Christ has wrought a great deliverance.
- v. 25.

Chapter VIII.—St Paul resumes the main thread of his argument, from which he had briefly digressed by the momentary assertion of the strength of the lower self. He now returns stoutly to the maintenance of his old position, viz. that the condemnation passed upon the eternal coming short of the Old Man is abolished for those who have become identified with the New. For the higher law of the Spirit works deliverance from the lower law of sin. External law being ineffectual through the impotence of the flesh nature, a higher way was revealed through Christ in which the law's requirements might be met by a life not of the animal but of the spiritual. For the animal and the spiritual are in eternal opposition : they are not, and never can be, reconciled. But he in whom the life of Christ is dwelling has ceased from his animalism ; having become dead to the sin-state, he no longer vitalises the things that belong to that state ; by a life in the direction of righteousness he has rendered the Spirit active within him.

v. 1.

v. 2.

v. 3.

v. 7.

v. 9.

v. 10.

To attempt a more detailed paraphrase of the remainder of this magnificent chapter would be almost of the nature of an impertinence, since Rom. viii. is probably one of the finest pieces of religious writing extant. It is as though the Divine spirit of the dogmatic, logical Pharisee suddenly broke through the web of phrase-weaving, and cold, orderly sequences by which his Gospel was gradually unfolding, and lifted it in a moment to a climax of dazzling splendour. No longer the careful and somewhat tedious balance of antitheses ; no longer the slow development of tensely wrought argument ; instead there breaks out a pæan of assured and triumphant optimism, based on an overwhelming persuasion of the inseparability of man from the love of God which is his source and his end, and confident of universal

restitution, not only for him, but for the Divine Spirit travelling in all created things. It would have been almost well had the Apostle ended his letter with this transcendent outburst, for we instinctively feel that his highest word has been spoken. In the next chapter, however, he drops to his old method of slow elaboration by antithesis.

- v. 7. *Chapter IX.*—He draws a contrast between Israel according to the flesh, and Israel according to the spirit, that none may glory in being simply of Abraham's seed : for unto Isaac was the promise made, and Isaac's offspring were dual—Esau and Jacob, light and darkness, good and evil. The Apostle seems here to indicate that only he is a true Israelite who has definitely entered into the calling and heritage of his race, which is to become a child of the Spirit, a child of promise. Under the old symbolic stories of the "word of promise," such as the birth of Isaac, the birth of Isaac's sons, a greater heir is indicated than the founder of Abraham's race,—the Heir, indeed, of all the Ages, the New Creation, the Spiritual Man. He is the true Israelite, and His manifestation in the hearts of men is the spiritual fulfilment of ancient hopes and histories. From this view of a spiritual Israel,
- v. 14. Esau and Jacob stand for the spiritual and material aspects of the race, and the Apostle goes on to exonerate the All-Just from apparent partiality by hinting that in
- v. 21. God the dual nature also exists, and demands corresponding vehicles of expression. Under the analogy of the Potter he raises the question whether God has not a right to manifest the aspect and the nature He chooses through appropriate vehicles definitely prepared ? Are not both
- v. 22. *ὁργή* and *δόξα* Divine manifestations, and the vessels both of honour and dishonour alike the product of one and the same lump, the work of one and the same Potter ?

In this much misunderstood passage the Apostle strikes at the very root of Dualism by referring to one Divine originating Power the contrasts of good and evil in the world. The purpose of this seeming injustice, he concludes, is partly shown by the recognition of the Gentile world as participators in the Gospel of Rightness to which they had themselves attained by the way of faith, in place of the great bulk of Israel who had stumbled at the stumbling-stone of legality. v. 24. v. 33.

Chapter X.—Nevertheless, he hopes and prays that Israel may be restored, for ignorance and not lack of zeal was the cause of their fall. Moses led them to trust to the rightness of law, but the rightness of faith shows a more excellent way. For the subject-matter of his teaching (*ῥήμα*), namely the indwelling of faith which is the saving principle in all men, is already in contact with humanity; its nearness and immanence demand neither a special descent from above, nor a special evolution from below; "it is in thy mouth and in thy heart," and a recognition by lip and heart of its power, as manifested in the Christ, leads to salvation. Herein lies the true ground of the universality of the Gospel, for the Divine Logos in all, and the one Father over all, place all races on an equality. (Argument implied in ver. 12.) v. 1. v. 2. v. 8. v. 12.

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